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# OUR TOWN;

OR,

## ROUGH SKETCHES

OF

CHARACTER, MANNERS, &c.

BY PEREGRINE REEDPEN.

"Your tales of men and manners, facts, home facts,  
Have you of these, sir?"

"I'm familiar with them.

---

"Oh! wonder!

How many goodly creatures are there here!

How beauteous mankind is! Oh! brave new world,

That has such people in 't!"

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

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1834.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE ensuing pages are an effort to describe the manners and peculiarities of some of the Author's present and by-gone acquaintance. The geography of our town is a matter on which no information is granted. It is of little import, and the reader will not be too inquisitive. There may be some who will fancy their own town is meant, and there may be others who will fancy they know the place and persons intended to be described; but for this let not the Author be blamed. To use a phrase very common in our town, the author might say to the former, "if the cap fit wear it," but as he does not mean to wound the self-love of any man, woman, or child, or to point

“Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,  
Thinks what ne’er was, nor is, nor e’er shall be.”

**Peregrine Reedpen knows himself to be—**

“Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.”

If this series should be smiled upon, there  
is no lack of materials in “Our Town.” A  
word to the wise——.

Peregrine Reedpen’s Observatory,  
Our Town, March 1834.



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## OUR TOWN.

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“Oh ! they marched through the town.”

OF all places where man is or can be tempted to take up his abode, commend me to an inland market-town ! Here we are closely packed, like as many rats in a corn-rick, one irregular row of houses following another, some high, some low, like a large family of children indiscriminately huddled together, the larger dwellings looking as if they would like to jump over the heads of the smaller. Whatever monotony may reign in the interior of these abodes, there is none in their exterior appearances ; in these all is variety — how charming ! It appears as if all the architects in the world had contributed their talents in the planning and erecting this nest of houses,

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and had exercised all their ingenuity in bringing them into as small a space as possible. Can this snugness be exceeded?

We lie in a delightful hollow, which in rural language is termed a valley; and so fondly attached are the inhabitants to the space within its limits, that if a hundred new habitations were to be built, they would be compressed within the same line of circumference. This love of locality is as pleasing as it is wonderful, and the determination not to leave the land of their birth, where their forefathers flourished and decayed, is as laudable as it is strong. Every spot has some blissful note of recognition—every yard of ground teems with pleasing remembrances. In that arbour my father used to recline, and smoke his pipe, and quaff his October; in that sty my father fatted his hogs; on this spot my father thrived, flourished, and died, and here will I do so likewise.

How laudable is this determination not to depart from the customs of their ancestors! With what an even tenor do these people pass their lives! Their pleasures run in a railroad,

never departing from a straight line. Moving only from one point to another, they progress gradually through the varying seasons of the year, and Christmas winds up all with its productions of geese and their concomitant festivities. This is true felicity !

Here, in this narrow circle, we are strangers to none who reside within it—we know everybody, and everybody knows us. And yet this mutual knowledge interrupts not the general predominance of that interest which each individual feels in his own affairs and pursuits. We are interested in others only so far as they may be connected with us in worldly matters. If a man die, we inquire if his loss affects us ; if it does not, it is much, and we grieve in proportion. If we lose a neighbour and lose nothing by him, we console ourselves by reflecting that worse might have happened. We talk of his virtues till he is buried, and then let him rest in peace, unless some of the living, better informed than ourselves, kindly point out his failings, and then we never fail to discuss them at every convenient opportunity — of course

with a view only to guard against such matters in our own persons.

How delightful it is thus to slide into the universal detestation of folly and vice in others, and to witness the fine-hearted feelings which prompt men to rake up the ashes of the departed for the amusement and benefit of the living! And so perfectly impartial are these unsophisticated people, that they will not allow even the manes of their best friends to lie undisturbed. How amiable and philanthropic must be the hearts of those who thus discard all the petty feelings of friendship, respect, and forbearance, that the faults of those who are gone may not be lost upon society!

In truth, there is nothing so desirable as a confined locality. Everything becomes so familiar in so short a time. In a month we have nothing to learn, whether of the place or the persons who inhabit it. I had not resided a fortnight in this dear little town when, by the generous desire to impart knowledge which is so commonly entertained by the excellent inhabitants, I was acquainted with the birth,

genealogy, life, character, and behaviour of every soul within it; and it was no less pleasing than singular to behold the eagerness with which they became the mutual historians of each other for my advantage. If I saw a person for the first time, he had no sooner turned his back than I was gratified with the detail of all that he had ever said, done, or contemplated, and sometimes, I have fancied, much more.

I could not but feel grateful for this; for it so clearly showed to me the long train of errors into which they had fallen, and the consequences were laid down with so much precision, that I must be wilful indeed ever to do the like myself. It also vastly contributed to my knowledge of human nature; indeed, it placed mankind in a new light. I had always, foolishly enough it must be owned, fancied virtue was more abundant and vice less profuse than I found, by these obliging and good-natured people, was the case. Of the former I heard but little, of the latter much. Possibly this might have happened from a desire on their

parts to render vice hateful to me, for they were all most laudably loud in their abhorrence of it when speaking of their neighbours.

Another advantage of this circumscribed locality was, that I equally soon learned to love and admire every shady lane, and green field, and sun-gilded heath, around it. In wet weather I could tell at a glance where every person had been walking by the colour of the mud on his or her legs. This superseded the necessity of inquiry on the subject; for if they were begrimed with mud of the ordinary hue, I knew they had been on the open roads to the westward; if they were bespattered with a mixture of black mud and water, I saw they had been wading through the nooks and turns of the dear shady lanes; and if they were foot-clogged by a stiff, clayey compost, I knew they had been striding over the beautiful open common. In dry weather, I had the same intimation from the dust.

And then, again, in my own walks in the country, which I have so often enjoyed, as every one possessing taste must, there were



many little vestiges springing up as I passed along which told who had been there before me. There was the print of somebody's clog, the impression of somebody's foot, sometimes the shoe itself, in the soft soil before alluded to. On a bramble in the hedge, where some fair creature enamoured of rural excursions had been creeping along on her "light fantastic toe," to avoid coming in contact with the mud, would hang the fringe of a shawl or scarf, a piece of muslin, or a bit of ribbon, as it might happen. If a party of us went out, we were never in danger of losing each other or ourselves; there were the indelible marks of their footsteps to show us which way they had gone, and our own to show us the way back again.

In short, there was no end to the benefits and blisses arising from these localities. I had formed an intimate acquaintance with every hedge, ditch, and stile, to say nothing of field and covert, within a crow's flight of the town. I could not behold them without some pleasurable reminiscences. Here I had broken my shins—there Mrs. — had got plump up to

her hips in water, and might have got up to her neck had I not gone in, too, to help her out — there Miss A. had displayed more than she intended, in trying to make a sylph-like bound over a gate — here Miss B. had trod upon a huge toad, and squashed its bloated carcase to a mummy — there the tight-waisted Mrs. C. had, in trying to clear a puddle by a flying leap, bursted her stay-lace with a report like a pocket-pistol — and there, in that very hedge, I had left the skirts of my coat, and walked home in a spenser.

Wilt thou take a walk with me, reader, through our town? The journey is short, but having once taken it, it will be deemed long enough. We are now standing at the door of the head inn, posting-house, and post-office, called “The Crown;” there is but little show of business, and in that little there is more noise than work. This is what the landlord would call a dull time. Opposite is “The King’s Head,” and for the sake of the respective proprietors it were to be wished that the crown was placed upon it.

If these two houses were joined in one, the owner might live; as it is, the two just contrive to starve. As may be expected, there is much enmity in their rivalry—hungry dogs fight fiercer for a bare bone than well-fed brutes for the choicest flesh.

The landlord of "The Crown" is somewhat aristocratic in his notions—a pert, insolent upstart, and looks with supreme contempt upon his opponent. He of "The King's Head" is a quiet, good sort of man enough; that is, he would be if he could, but—he has a wife! This lady keeps him in hot-water. She wears all the flesh from his bones; and while he wanders about long, thin, and haggard, she fattens on his misery. She is not more than twenty stone—very little less. She is just as aristocratic as he of "The Crown;" very showy, too; fond of laces and finery; and likes to adorn her children in the fashion of the showfolks. Her husband, poor man! endures it. There is nothing fine about him—that is, in dress. His person is becoming "fine by degrees, and beautifully less." Another year or two and he

will be an *anatomie vivante*. There he now goes off with his spade and barrow, to the small garden which he cultivates, and where he enjoys the only calm hours of his life.

On our left stands an indescribable sort of erection, called "The Market House;" so called, I presume, because no market is or ever was held within it. It now serves as a rendezvous for all the ragged and idle boys of the place, where, as you see, they learn to swear and gamble, and cultivate other gentlemanly accomplishments. In the apartments above, an old lady teaches "the young idea how to shoot," as mistress of the charity-school for the children of the town, between whom and her pupils is maintained a system of mutual torment and absolute hatred. The children have learned the art of teasing made easy, and practise it upon the *gouvernante*. The old woman scolds, thumps, pinches, sets long lessons, and confines on half-holidays. She is the essence of all that is disagreeable in old women, and that is no trifle. One look of her's would pickle a jar of onions as well as an ocean of vinegar.

On our right is the residence of the late chief medical practitioner of the place, who, fortunately for the community, has now retired, and lives upon a very handsome property acquired in his profession.

From the cursory glance that you, my dear reader, will take of our town, you would not deem it a place in which any man would be likely to realise a fortune; but, if you were to give it a fair trial, you would alter your opinion. Our town is neither very large, very populous, nor extremely wealthy; but the people are generally what they understand by the term "well to do in the world," and most of them have the "fore-horse by the head."

Somebody has observed, that the habits of a people, and the powers of their language, are to be discovered by the idiomatic expressions they are in the habit of using; be this as it may, I shall give occasionally such phrases as are most commonly in use in our town, and its vicinity, because, though of a homely character, they are usually expressive. A very popular writer, who is much enamoured of rustic peculiarities,

has observed that she "never hears *bad* English, but she expects to hear *good* sense:" the reader may have to encounter sentences at which the late Lindley Murray would have groaned; but "ears polite," that is, if they are ears sensible, will not be quite shocked at them. They will excuse the *bad* English, and if they can discover the *good* sense so much the better, if not, so——

To return again to our town, and fortune-making. There are several instances in which handsome incomes have been acquired by those who were strangers to the place, and who have "dropped in," merely because they could go nowhere else. It has been their *dernier resort*, their forlorn hope, but it has turned out a good speculation for all that. Many persons, for instance, who never had anything but learning, or who have lost all they ever had but learning, could not commence business in any other place because capital was required; here they could do it for nothing, their expenses were few and trifling, their gains were slow, but certain, and if they were discreet they

could not fail of ultimate success. As we progress we shall give more than one specimen of this class; at present it is our business only to inquire into the career of the "*head*" doctor.

Dr. Slaimour was one of those who carried their fortunes in their heads. He had not the advantage of having been "born with a silver spoon in his mouth," as our good people say, but then, as they observe, "it is better to be born lucky than rich." He had his professional knowledge for his fortune, and came to our town in the course of his itinerant searches after employment, in that worst of all slavery, an apothecary's drudge. Here he luckily found it, just — as old Lot, our knowing tailor, observes — "just as his last pair of shoes were worn out." Mr. Slaimour was an active, industrious, and prudent young man. He did not become proud or lazy when he had obtained a comfortable situation; he did not gamble, run into debt, aspire to his master's daughter, involve himself in love intrigues with the servant girls, or play any of those pranks in the eye of Heaven which distinguish

“young men of spirit.” He curtailed his expenses to the shortest possible outlay, paid everybody punctually, treated his master and his family with due respect, made acquaintances and friends amongst the inhabitants, flattered their opinions, fell in with their prejudices, went regularly to church, and, above all, maintained the interests of our town, and praised its pork and pigs. Nothing else was required.

In laying down these rules for his conduct, Mr. Slaimour had discovered that for which so many alchemists have in vain burned their fingers, and have been burned themselves for their unholy proceedings—the philosopher’s stone. Although he never yet found out the *elixir vitæ*, or, if he did, never gave it to his patients, and though he is blamed (justly or not we neither know nor care) for shortening the mundane progress of several of His Majesty’s liege subjects, he was still supported. If a patient died, and patients will die as we all know, it was said that his or her fate was in higher hands than those of Mr. Slaimour—the



"appointed time was come," and "nothing could have saved" the deceased from dying.

Mr. Slaimour was never sorry to shift the onus from his own shoulders to any other quarter, and never quarrelled with anybody that did so for him. When a patient did happen to recover, he was universally acknowledged to be a "clever man," an assertion which he never denied, and it at length became proverbial. People took it for granted. His master having died, he obtained the whole of the practice, in which he had formerly only a share to himself. The result is, that he is now retired, is one of our bankers, has purchased several farms, and, as people say, a hundred thousand pound man.

Doctor Slaimour's figure is long, and wiry. People sometimes say "he *gets* thin," but that is out of the question. He says he was never stouter than he is, and to get thinner is impossible. He is a bit of a gourmand, and has an abominable zest for hot suppers. His excesses are numerous at the solid substantial parties

which are given in our town, to most of which he is invited ; but he never goes unprovided with the means of correcting them. To prevent any serious consequences he takes a box of pills in his waistcoat pocket, two or three of which he puts on his plate and very adroitly tosses into his mouth with his knife during the progress of his meal, generally observing to the persons on each side of him, “ You see I rub *off* as I go *on*.” Such, and a few other peculiarities, distinguish him. He is fond of glee-singing, likes dearly to take a part in “ Drink to me only with thine eyes,” and sings in a tremulous, old-womanish kind of voice—note, he hath a very ludicrous “ *cast*” in his organs of vision.

The doctor is a bachelor, and likely to be so. He is not a marrying man. Malthus has driven anti-matrimonial notions into his head, and he never hears the subject mentioned without a cold chill. He hates children—the sight of one makes him outrageous. Let him catch one on his own premises—he will chase him as he would a pole-cat. If the doctor could have

things his own way, he would be a second king Herod. His sister, a lady who has been blind from her birth, superintends the management of his domestic concerns. Notwithstanding her affliction she is extremely shrewd and clever, and performs the duties of her office with great dexterity. The servants declare that "she can see more than them that have eyes." This lady is extremely and unaccountably anxious to conceal her infirmity, and may be seen at church holding a prayer-book during the service, and apparently reading it with great devotional attention; but, if you look closely, you will perceive that the book is as often held upside downwards as the contrary way.

It is said that the worthy doctor has done much to colonize the churchyard — and where is the doctor who has not? It is their vocation; if people will take physic, what can they expect? All that I know of Dr. Slaimour is obtained from his neighbours. They tell strange tales, which I do not care to repeat; but while we sink scandal, we may have our joke. Ah! there is the man himself,

mounted on a horse that does not look as if he took his oats *ad libitum*, and followed by three or four ugly curs, called by their master "sporting dogs." They are giving tongue. Confound their yelping !

The doctor has his double-barrel, for he does not now "kill two birds with one stone," whatever he may have done. His shooting-jacket, of brown velveteen, is not of the newest ; indeed, if a poor man had it on his back, he would be suspected of having denuded a scarecrow. His thin, sharp visage is somewhat concealed by a wide-brimmed hat of straw, which looks as if he sometimes doubled it up for convenience, and put it into his pocket. The thorns and brambles have evidently been busy there. His spider limbs are encased in leather gaiters, surmounted by corduroy.

Seven or eight hours will that man walk after game, innocent of killing, and call it "sport." But if he does not kill the birds, he terribly frightens them, it must be confessed. His appearance, the yelling of his dogs, and his vast expenditure of powder, are

more than enough for that. However, he is very harmless, and nobody objects to his shooting over whatever ground he pleases. It is thought that the birds and hares, in time, will become used to him, as they find that what is sport to him will never be death to themselves.

The worthy doctor, wisely enough, never sported till he left off practice, as it might have interrupted his professional duties ; but when he retired, at the age of sixty or thereabouts, he abandoned wisdom and carried a gun. He talks much of the joys of his pursuit, and begins his observations with " We, sportsmen," and generally gives a personal anecdote after the fashion of sportsmen. In short, he would be as good a sportsman as the best if he could only shoot well enough.

He has clandestine assignations with — Oh ! don't start, reader, it is not *that* sort of thing I mean ; the doctor is a moral man—his assignations are with a poacher, who furnishes him with a supply of game on the usual terms, with which the doctor swells his pockets, and returns home triumphant. " Capital sport —

capital sport!" he exclaims, while his eyes sparkle and twinkle with evident glee, and he exultingly displays his stock of game to all around him.

The community of poachers talk of subscribing for a new shooting-jacket for him, in token of their gratitude for the support and encouragement he affords them. Were all sportsmen like him, poachers would be essentially necessary. Well, long may he continue to ramble! "Happiness," as Swift says, "is the perpetual possession of being well-deceived," and no man ever took more pains to deceive himself than the doctor does when he persuades himself he is a sportsman. He will never kill anything, unless he has recourse to physic. I wonder he never thought of trying it. Who knows what the effect of a dose might be upon the feathered race? His former success argues well for it.

Having discharged the doctor, we will take a view of the "High Street," as it is good-naturedly called, of "Our Town." Take my arm, reader, and we will walk to the market-house.

There, now we can see it to advantage. First, take a glance at the whole, then we will particularize. Was ever Quiet—undisturbed, positive, real, genuine quiet—so forcibly presented to thy view? What repose is here! We seem as if in a place where all the people were petrified, like those of the enchanted city in the Arabian Nights. Not a soul is to be seen, not a word to be heard. How calm, how soothing, how delightful! After all the busy turmoil of the metropolis, how pleasing to escape to this dear and tranquil spot! How conducive to meditation! Two lines of houses, and every one as much unlike the other as possible, except in silence. That is deep and profound. Every building seems like a sepulchre, and this gloomy sky, and the thin drizzling rain which descends from it, give a touching finish to the picture—a thrilling effect, which once felt is never to be effaced: How Hervey would have gloried in a scene like this!

The exterior of the buildings harmonises so well with the sky, that the keeping ought not to be destroyed, and one cannot but wish that

such. may ever be the skies which hang over so enviable a spot. After gazing upon this loved, and lovable scene, as it now appears, so unique and perfect as it is, who would wish to see the gaudy and gorgeous sun, burst forth, and like a devastating fire destroy the heart-striking beauties which here reign supreme. The golden rays would be no more in accordance with such a scene than with the vale of Death. Who would ever wish to leave such a spot? Who is there that would not gladly fly from all the world to breathe the still air, and enjoy the sequestered shade in which we are enveloped.

There is one peculiarity in this scene which no other picture ever possessed. I have seen the most fascinating of Claude's landscapes passed by persons without taste or feeling, and their beauties have been utterly lost upon them. It is not so here. However barren may be the souls of the spectators, everybody feels the effect of this picture. It is lost upon none. It sinks "deeper and deeper still," and



the brawling and boisterous are at once subdued to the quiet level and the still gloom of the spot they gaze upon. How magical is the operation, and how strikingly pleasing it is to witness! The eyes become heavy and glazed, the features lose their animation, and the bosom heaves high, and sighs forth sensations which are too powerful to be expressed by words.

How inadequate, indeed, is all language to describe what is here felt so keenly! Here we need not "The Sorrows of Werter." Blessed spot! when I forget thy silent yet eloquent charms, I shall cease to remember all that I ever knew. I am not given to apostrophise, yet I confess that, on days like this, I have been involuntarily led into sundry ejaculations which have vehemently pourtrayed my exquisite sense of the merits of the scene before me.

Everybody must admire Washington Irving's admirable description of a wet Sunday at a country inn; it approaches as near perfection as anything of human origin well can do, but it was at Derby, I think, that the Sunday

was passed. Had it been at either of the inns in "Our Town," the picture would have been perfection itself.

Dear abode ! long may thy inhabitants continue to enjoy thy beauties ! May they never be driven beyond thy limits to feel that, after their sojourn here, they have no taste for the varieties of the world ! Thou art fitted for them, and they are adapted to thee, and thee only. Let both remain *sans changer*.

## SHOPS AND SHOPKEEPERS.

WE will now, reader, take note of the principal buildings in "The High Street."—First, there is the house on our left which was once white. It is decidedly the handsomest in the place, and might induce a stage-coach passenger to think it a tolerable mansion; but, alas! the deceptive impressions which external appearances cause!—it is all front. Only one row of rooms, and those not the most convenient. But they are neat notwithstanding—and of that sort of neatness which one likes to see in country residences. No nick-knacks—no gewgaws—all real, solid, and substantial.

The proprietor is a worthy old gentleman, I believe, that is, considering—he is a lawyer. He loves agriculture, and as he is now consider-

ably advanced in life, indulges in his farming pursuits, and leaves "lawyering," as he calls it, to his sons. They are two young men of worthy character. One a fine, open-looking, well-favoured, and well-grown fellow, who looks as if he liked Burgundy better than Burn, and claret better than Coke. The other is shorter and darker, but with much of goodnature in his countenance, and his face speaks the truth. Both are favourable specimens of their species, and in the exercise of their professional duties, which are sometimes, of course, unpleasant to themselves, and more so to others, there is as much of kindness and forbearance as men can show in such situations. Both are, I believe, steady in their application to business, and in a fair way to thrive. May they succeed, and so we will just bid them good morning, and take a peep at the next abode !

That is a house recently "done up," as the phrase goes. It belongs to one of the proprietors of the adjoining shop, a jolly, beer-loving, wine-bibbing, cribbage-playing, fox-hunting,

good-sort-of-fellow. He will give you the best to eat and drink, and plenty of it. No fear of leaving his house with a sense of emptiness. He regards his visitors as he would as many turkeys, and crams them accordingly. He is one of a large family, all in trade, all successful, and all deserving of being so. This one is the jolliest of them. "Fifteen two," are his delight. In the long winter evenings, when business is over, his fingers itch to be pegging. He always appeared to me to make pleasure of his business, and toil of his pleasures. However, he enjoys himself, and that is the end he aims at.

He rides a good horse, which he calls, after the fashion of home-bred Englishmen, by an outlandish name, Buffalo, or Rhinoceros, or some such term. But it is a good animal notwithstanding the lamentable name he is obliged to bear, and one would have thought the weight of his master (sixteen stone or thereabouts, he will be two-and-twenty,) was enough for him to bear without it. The horse, as he lifts his fine head, and opens his expressive

eye, seems to ridicule the barbarous taste of his master.

Strange tales are told of that horse, by the way, of which it would be as well not to believe more than half. His master gives good dinners, and there are certain "hangers-on" whose tact has allowed them to discover that if a hunter is sensible to flattery, it is always most predominant in the matter of horse-flesh; and they have, as did the injudicious friends of Miss Fanny Kemble, so bespattered the beast with praise, that we do not expect to find a weak point about him. It is to be regretted that the horse is not made aware of their foolery, that he might kick them for their pains; most assuredly he would if he knew it, for there is more intelligence and sagacity in his eye than in half the eyes in the place.

Even his master sometimes tells wonderful stories of the powers and speed of his *Bucephalus*; but that is a sort of thing not to be wondered at. Every man's horse is the best in the world. A man may speak ill of his wife—we expect that, and think nothing about it. We

think none the worse of the lady, because we attribute her "lord and master's" spleen to a redundancy of bile, which he cannot help. Indeed it is but natural to backbite a wife; but he that would speak ill of his horse must be heartless indeed, and ought to be expelled all society.

The owner of this animal is, in more senses than one, a good sort of man, and of course this is enough to make some persons carp at him. It is no part of our business, reader, to enter into scandal, therefore we will not heed what may be reported. He will serve another if he can, but certain feelings, which are natural to commercial men and prudential in all, induce him to consult the welfare of his family and himself in doing so. In a word, he likes "to be safe," and he is right, or he might require to be served himself, and then the hunter might be "at fault."

His abode has recently undergone strange alterations, and, what is more strange, as regards alterations in general, those he has made are improvements. The dining-room, of course,

the principal apartment in his establishment, has been enlarged and re-decorated, and I believe an after-thought, in the shape of a smoking-room, or something of that sort, has been added. He is a lucky fellow, that fox-hunter—so I must call him, for his trades are so multifarious, that it is impossible to give the preference to one in particular—but a lucky fellow he is, that is certain.

He has a good-natured, good-managing wife as man need have, and she presents him with a “pledge of their affections,” as the sentimentalists say, every year. Poor lady! she is sadly liberal in this respect; but her jolly husband laughs, eats, and drinks, as usual. Things prosper, and what cares he? I believe he knows not what care of any sort is—I hope he never may. But his wife has a terrible time of it; no sooner “as well as can be expected,” than she is “as ladies wish to be,” &c. Her whole time is occupied in caudle and christenings, and cold water is no sooner thrown upon one thing, than she is making caps for another. And yet, amidst all this, the good-



hearted creature is happy, smiling, and contented.

Ah! there go the whole troop home from school! one, two, three, four—mercy upon us! there's no end to the train! If you have once seen their father, you will never need to ask their names; "as like him as two peas in a pod," as the gossips have it. And see how they are dancing, leaping, hallooing, and roaring; giving vent to the exuberance of their spirits in every possible noise they can make. True chips of the parent block; fat, chubby, frolicksome, and uproarious. Full of mischief, too. See, the eldest is trying to upset one of the youngest, who is about the second step of the ladder; down he goes, white frock and all, right in the mud; another goes to help him up, he is pushed down too; another, ditto; then goes the girl, and a thump on the back sends her sprawling over the others. While she is scrambling with her hands and nose in the mud, the eldest mounts upon her back, and shouts triumphantly at the very top of his lungs. But look in the parlour window—there

is the good lady appearing not quite so amiable as she usually does, and out comes the nursemaid. We may guess the *finale*, and so leave them.

This next house is "the shop," the "*head-shop*" of the town. It is kept by the bluff fellow we have just been attempting to describe, and his brother ; or rather the shop keeps them. Who can describe the medley within ? It has often been a matter of wonder to me how the deuce they can remember their own various lines of business. Farmers, maltsters, corn-dealers, coal-merchants, hatters, woollendrapers, tailors, linendrapers, grocers, cheese-mongers, undertakers, bakers, stationers, tobacconists, soap and tallow-chandlers, and God knows what besides !

What puzzles me more is, that with so many irons in the fire none of them burn, or grow cold. All goes on regularly and comfortably.

You may get anything in that shop, from a child's shoe to your own coffin ; but—oh the perversity of all human affairs—the chances are

that you can't get the very thing you particularly want. They never tell you they don't sell it, for they would deem it a disgrace not to sell any and everything; but they are "quite out of that article at present, but Mr.—— (that is, the brother of the fox-hunter) will be going to town shortly, and *then*" — So you must wait till then.

For my part, I wonder they are not "quite out" of all things, their minds included, with such a salmagundi of occupations. If these men don't "deserve success," who does? or who can? They seem to do more than that, they "command it." Fortune is to them like a spaniel, they have only to whistle, and she follows them. On they go, without rashness, and without timidity, but with caution, and "*moveo et propitior*" seems to be their motto.

Business is to them fortune's car, they are seated in it, and they have the good sense to keep it on the turnpike-road. They grease the wheels, pay the tolls, and proceed at a steady pace. They go gently over the stones, keep clear of ruts, preserve their springs, and

do not capsize. Now, men may cavil as they will, but there is much merit in this. These brothers may not have an overflow of wit, but they have sense; they may not have imagination, but they have understanding, and firmness of purpose, with propriety of conduct, and sufficient prudence to enable them to ascend in the scale of life. In all this there is more merit than is possessed by those who carp at their peculiarities, and ridicule their want of polish. And there are many who do, and some who partake of their hospitality are not the most forbearing. No man can be successful in any undertaking without being envied, and those who envy, either do not know or forget that they render themselves inferior to those they decry.

Our twin shopkeepers — twins by the way in that only — fulfil all the duties of the station in which they move with credit to themselves and advantage to their connexions. They refuse not their mite to the unfortunate, and whether as sons, husbands, fathers, or neighbours, they stand as well, or at least deserve to stand as

well, in the world's estimation, as mankind in general. They are not sneaking, bowing, or cringing, as shopkeepers sometimes are, but they are peaceable, well-disposed and upright men. They will succeed in spite of the ill-natured.

The house on the other side of the shop is the dwelling of the other partner of the firm. It is characteristic of its proprietor, who is much more quiet and close in his habits than the fox-hunter. *He* does not ride a "rhinoceros," or any other animal. He does not look like a riding-man. He seems to be one who would rather rely upon his own understanding than that of the best piece of horse-flesh that ever cleared a five-barred gate. He is not so fat as his brother — he is more plodding. He never sports top-boots — plain trowsers and sober shoes for him. He is the *in-door* man — the fox-hunter is the "traveller" to the concern. He shoots a little, but the little is done pretty well. By the way, I do not think the highest of his judgment in dogs. His late bargain in a certain animal, which he bought of the minor

apothecary of the town, seems to argue against it. It could not be said of him that he was, "*Tache sans tache.*" But more of him when we come to his late master.

The house is a quiet-looking, plain, brick edifice, rather small for such a family, for he of whom we now write rivals the fox-hunter in "love-pledges." Never were such men—never such enduring women as their partners. The goddess Intercidona has them under her especial care. What with the marriages, and intermarriages of their progeny, the inhabitants of the town will be all of one name in an age or two. He of the brick-house loves cribbage also, and is hospitable. Indeed he is *like* his brother, "and yet how unlike!" But they do very well together. As was said of Fabius Maximus and his brother consul, one is the sword, the other the buckler. Their system "works well," as Mr. Canning observed, when speaking of higher affairs, and if they are not Alexanders or Miltons, Solons or Swifts, when the ledger of life comes to be posted, they may find as clear a balance in their favour as any.

## THE SURVEY CONTINUED.

## ODDS AND ENDS.

IT may be thought the subjects of the last chapter were dwelt upon at somewhat too great length; but as they are the chief men of their class, I was rather particular with them. The others will be dismissed with more brevity, in consideration of thy patience, gentle reader, and of this "Scotch mist," which is still dripping, and would, ere our ramble was finished, wet us to the skin if we did not make haste. Ah! one of the boys in the market-house is "weatherwise," he says "there is a *pelter* coming." So much the better, anything for a change, and a "pelter" let it be, if it rain a deluge. If the windows are broken, the tiles cracked, and the soot washed down the chim-

neys like a stream of "Hunt's matchless," it will be preferable to this monotonous drizzle, drizzle, drizzle.

The next house after "*The Shop*," is a linendraper's. Little business is done there, and that little but so, so. The next is a would-be rival to the head shop, or dépôt. They are cotemporaries, it is true, but the rivalry is pretty much the same at that which would exist between "*The Times*" and "*The Morning Advertiser*," if the latter were presumptuous enough to attempt it; it does no harm to their opponents, and no good to themselves. It is a sort of general store, like the former, but on a petty scale. The proprietors of this concern are brothers too, but there is nothing striking about them, they are every-day-sort-of-people.

Then come we to a dingy, narrow lane, leading to what may be termed "the back-settlements" of our town. Your looks, courteous reader, plainly express that you have no particular relish for the delicacies of this unexplored region, and we will leave them to be enjoyed



by their respective proprietors, only observing that this may be considered a part of "the holy land" of this place.

On the other side of the lane is a row of "messuages and tenements," for no other name can be found for such a collection of inhabited rubbish; and these we pass over in silence, with the exception of a dark, low, dirty hovel, ycleped "*The Cooper's Shop*," merely, I presume, to show how terms may be perverted. This filthy hole is merely noticed that we may give a brief sketch of the owner, as rough as himself, if possible. This man is the only cooper in the place; and consequently, if he were sober and industrious, would be, to use the common phrase, "well to do;" but he is an indefatigable drinker, a dissolute sot, whose delight is to pass as much time as possible in the low public houses and beer-shops, for none else will admit him within their doors, and these only when he shows them the money. He works about three days in each week, and drinks the remainder. He sleeps where he has his debauch — on the "settle," or floor of his

tavern ; where he works he also sleeps, with a litter of eight or nine children, the fruits of his marriage with a woman who died a victim to his ill-treatment. These unfortunate beings are huddled together upon the shavings and chips made by their father in his working moods. Straw, if it can be obtained, is their " bed of roses ;" and while their parent is enjoying his ease in his inn, they are left to the miseries of cold and hunger, from which they are sometimes relieved by the neighbours.

Since the decease of his unhappy wife, the cooper has not been guilty of any intention to matrimonialise ; but, like some other gentlemen, he has taken a mistress. This lady, who is a widow, has also a large family, whose appearance denotes squalid poverty and starvation ; but they are generally clean notwithstanding, for she is remarkably industrious, and both herself and her children would be tolerably well fed by the produce of her labours, were it not for her miserable infatuation for the sot-tish cooper, to whom is regularly given the greater part of her earnings. Whilst she and

her offspring are hungry and cold, he is reveling in disgusting debauchery. The fruits of this *liaison* are two or three "illegitimates," and the lady is apparently in a fair way of adding another to our overgrown population. Neither she nor the cooper are political economists, "that's flat;" they have, between their former loves and their present, a matter of one-or-two-and-twenty. Many good housewives in our town, who admire her industry, have offered this woman to provide her with a constant supply of work between them, and to aid her further in the clothing and support of the unfortunate children, if she will leave her present mode of living; but such is the force of the tender passion, that she declares it impossible to tear herself from the soft embraces of her lover.

Reader, didst thou ever see a perfect drunkard? If not, here is one. Look into that smoky den, where, amongst two or three buckets without handles, and sundry old tubs and barrels almost without hoops, he stands upon one leg, having the other crossed over it, and

resting on the point of his toe-less shoe. Look at his bloated carcase, the trunk of which is an apt illustration, both in shape and occupation, of "a waste-butt." His puffed, but yellow-looking and unhealthy cheeks are swollen to a beastly rotundity ; his eyes are small, lustreless, and heavy, and almost buried in the mass of bilious fat that rises beneath them. His lips are blackened by the fever that rages within, and he is now standing in the sullen rage of disappointment at having been foiled in every scheme his leaden fancy could suggest, of procuring his favourite beverage. His clothes are disgustingly filthy, and reeking of the last night's drunkenness ; his knees are unfastened, his hose down to his ankles, showing the calves of his legs, which are wasting away, as if they had ascended to swell the protuberance above. One of his feet is covered by an old boot fastened on, not laced, with a piece of rope-yarn ; the other is partly covered by a shoe worn out before and behind, and disclosing the muddy and gouty-looking toes, and the huge shining heel. His hair is matted, though short, and

bears the aspect of a well-worn rope-mat on a wet day. Neckcloth he has none, and never has, and his bull-like throat, as dirty as the other parts of his person, is exposed to view. Go not near him, reader, or thou wilt never breathe again. The exhalations from that mass of tainted blubber, and the foetid breath, worse a thousand times than that of the Anaconda, would be as deadly a poison to thee as the atmosphere surrounding the Upas tree.

And this wretch is the object of woman's love ! For him she will undergo every privation of which it is possible to form an idea ; without food, fire, or bedding in the most inclement seasons — that his brutal appetites may be gorged to loathsome repletion. In his foul caresses she finds all her felicity, and deems it a compensation for all she has undergone, and still undergoes, to obtain it ! Human nature !

See, he comes to the door in the hope that somebody may pass of whom he may obtain what he desires. Shades of Gall and Spurzheim, cast a glance at that “ forehead villain-

ously low," and the developement of organs behind it, and exult in your system. Deville, come here and take a cast—he will let thee have it for a pot or a gallon of beer at most, and for the triumph of the theory which thou hast advocated with so much energy thy coach-fare were well expended.

His children are crowding around him, and are crying for bread wherewith to appease their craving hunger; he curses them, and kicks them away with heartless cruelty. No, reader, give not relief here—thou art charitable, but thy good intentions would be defeated. The money thou wouldst bestow on these poor children would be forced from them by blows and kicks such as we have already seen. But we will manage better. We will go to "Old Lot," of whose private history more anon, and he will cheerfully become our instrument. He will buy bread, and other necessaries sufficient for the purpose, which he will take to his own house, and smuggle off the children to their welcome meal.

Having "fed the hungry," we will again

look about us. Two or three houses occupied by "nobody knows who," fill up this side of the High Street. The same number on the opposite side are of a similar description. Then we have the paltry little "Chemist's Shop," with its narrow window, and its solitary bottle of coloured water, underneath which is a sixpenny model of a horse bought of some wandering Italian, in the middle of it. This "depôt for genuine medicines," for man and horse, is kept by a lieutenant of the navy now on half-pay. He is a rare specimen of a profession whose members are generally manly, generous, and liberal. This man was promoted without having "seen a shot fired in anger;" he passed the whole drowsy round of probation on channel service, or harbour duty. Put "upon the shelf," he became an idle man, and has so continued ever since, his "shop" being only an apology for indolence. Idleness is the parent of mischief, and the lieutenant was obliged to relieve the tedious monotony of his life by matrimony. He took a wife in the shape of a little, gaudy, frenchified, piece of

finery, a *ci-devant* dress-maker of our town, who is full of affectation but somewhat pretty withal, though sickly in her looks.

Taking a wife is, *if* a foolish, a very natural action; but "what demon whispered" our lieutenant to turn chemist, I could never guess. Turn chemist, however, he did, and wrote up in his windows "Physicians' prescriptions *accurately* prepared." He was wholly innocent of Latin, and was therefore obliged to retain a junior usher of the Bishop of Burleigh's school, as a translator of such prescriptions as foolish people might send him, at a standing salary of five shillings per quarter. The young gentleman made one or two ludicrous mistakes, which, considering all things, may be excused. An old lady who lives in a lane leading out of our "back-street," upwards of sixty years of age, dry and withered in person, and fidgety in temper, had a prescription for spasms, which she usually had made up at the city of ———, some ten miles off; but having experienced a sudden attack, and her stock of physic being exhausted, she sent her treasured paper to the



*soi-disant* "chemist," who sent it to the usher. The translator, finding these words at the end of the form — "*Fiat Haustus, pro re nata, urgente flatu sumendus,*" instructed the chemist to write on the label — "This draught to be given to the *thing born* whenever it is *troubled with wind.*" The astonishment of the venerable creature may well be conceived. She knew herself guiltless of ever having given birth to any "thing." She was insulted, and indignant. She sent the draught back, and would not pay for it. The affair caused considerable merriment amongst the friends of the respective parties, at the time, and they have had to endure sundry sly, quizzical remarks occasionally, ever since.

Another mistake, made by the "chemist" himself, was more serious. The "little doctor's" wife *had* a "thing born," to which, on the day after its birth, its papa fancied it necessary to give a dose of the "*Syrupus sennæ.*" He was out of the article, and sent a servant to his friend the chemist for some. The latter sent a bottle of the syrup of poppies. The nurse gave the

quantity ordered by the little doctor, who had been called out during the absence of the servant, and — the child never wanted any more medicine. For some time the doctor denounced vengeance against the chemist, and the chemist breathed defiance to the doctor; both, however, took care to keep at a very respectful distance from each other, and only talked to their friends of their hostile intentions, which fortunately evaporated in breath. Both parties, indeed, are apt to make themselves appear worse than they really are. Not wishing to appear too amiable, they are in the habit of libelling themselves as very quarrelsome, fighting, dangerous sort of fellows; but they are unkind to themselves; in truth they are very peaceable, lamb-like men as one need wish to see. I am happy to say they are very good friends now. Time reconciles us to most things.

From the chemist's shop to the narrow lane leading to "the back street," there is neither house nor inhabitant worthy of notice. The lane itself is only remarkable for dirt and darkness. It contains the "*head* Blacksmith's"

shop, which was formerly occupied by a very worthy old fellow, whom the good folks have deemed a second Solomon. He practised largely in the healing art, from the healing of broken chilblains to that of wounded consciences. His ostensible business—that of shoeing and “doctoring” horses, was the least of his concerns. He was the “oracle” of the place; when he spoke every body’s ears and mouths were opened, and if a dog had dared to bark during his oration, he would have been kicked to death for his presumption. Not by the old man himself, be it remembered, for he never hurt any one creature, always excepting those he physicked, but the admiring crowd would have punished an interruption of his harangues. Poor old man! he is gone now, and every one misses him; he will be talked of with grateful respect during this and the succeeding generation, and deservedly too, for he was a good neighbour, a pious christian, a kind friend to the poor, and an honest, upright, industrious, and peaceable man.

In the eyes of the poor he was the greatest man that ever lived. There was nothing he could not do, and would not do for them if requested. If they broke their arms he mended them; if they broke their gridirons he did the same. He made nails for their shoes, iron tips for ditto, salve for their corns, lotions for their eyes, embrocations for the "rheumatiz," balsam for cut fingers, ointment for a thousand things, pills that were good for all ages, sexes, and disorders; plasters to make weak backs strong, and a host of other invaluable articles, which he administered gratis. Doctor Slaimour himself, was looked upon as "nothing," compared with the farrier. He drew their teeth, he drew out their wills, and he did his best to draw them from evil ways. In short, he was in many instances the benefactor of the poor, and they felt it. His funeral was attended by all of them with the greatest respect, and an admirable sermon was preached on the occasion by our curate—the best sermon our curate ever made.

The successor to the blacksmith is the

nephew of the departed. Of him I will say all that he ever says of himself, which by the common rule, and this man's personal illustration, will give a full estimate of his qualities. His boast is, that he "never pricked or lamed a horse since he has been in business." In other respects he is —

Opposite the "forge" is a public-house, frequently the scene of the cooper's debaucheries, and the general resort of the idle and the profligate. "Bowers" are sometimes erected here, where dancing, drinking, and other things which shall be nameless, are carried on till long after Phœbus has proclaimed the day. These events are generally rendered memorable by the ulterior expenses they bring upon the parish authorities, and many a muddy-faced urchin that now inhabits our "poor-house," may trace his origin to "bowers," and "Maying," and other rural amusements, to which, if sound and meaning had no connexion, we might attach, like many other good-humoured and amiable people, some innocent and poetical associations.

A very clever and kind-hearted writer, who never looks upon human nature but when the sun shines upon it, has said "a country may-ing is a meeting of lads and lasses of two or three parishes, who assemble in certain erections of green boughs called may-houses, to dance and ——" Here the fair author has left off, merely, as she states, because she will not forestall her description, but in fact she has left off just where she ought to leave the subject. That expressive blank will tell more of the results of "maying" than twenty pages of letter-press; and if any more particular specification of the "innocent happiness" of such scenes is required, it may be gained a few months after they have occurred, by a single glance at the said "lasses" who assembled to "dance and ——," or by application to the overseers of the said "two or three parishes."

I do not quarrel with the fair writer for her favourable view of these things. She just went to take a peep at the "maying,"—saw "smiling faces,"—"young mothers with infants in their arms,"—"ragged urchins trying to cheat

and being cheated,"—and noted that the bright sun was shining gloriously upon all, and then went home at an early hour, as she ought to do. She did not stay to witness the end of the "innocent happiness," and we do not expect in our amiable author any prying curiosity on the subject. Of course she never suspected that that day's sport would produce more "young mothers," and "ragged urchins." She had no business with such matters; her office was to describe what she saw with an enthusiastic imagination, and to gild all with the sweet poesy of her prose. We blame her not for this, reader, nor can she blame us if we have not discovered the Arcadian innocence she has found everywhere. It may be the difference only of locality, but truth obliges us to declare that we have never seen aught in the maying of London chimney-sweepers to "soil the imagination," (the soot excepted,) more than in these "rural customs."

Then come we to 'The Dolphin,' omitting one or two tenements, by the way, which is kept by a queer sort of a fellow, "neither fish nor flesh;"

famous for bad beer, worse spirits, and double scores. His parlour is the evening rendezvous of those tradesmen who are prone to politics, and who, in fact, after having attended during the day to their own business, conceive the evening may be as well employed in looking after other people's. Our second-rate schoolmaster, a drunken old lieutenant of his Majesty's royal navy, is famous for his revels in this smoky den; and the "*head* lawyer's" head clerk, who pays his own debts by making other people pay theirs; the jolly old butcher and his brother; the painters and glaziers, two quarrelsome fellows, who can never agree though they are partners, and sundry other similar personages, usually assemble about seven in the evening, continue there till every faculty is stultified, and their garments saturated with the fumes of beer and tobacco, and then sally forth at midnight, or after, to "*bay the moon*" with their hideous yells, and disturb the sober part of the community by ringing bells, and abusing knockers.

After "*The Dolphin*" comes our ironmonger's



shop, a very respectable affair, kept by a very respectable old man, who hath recently taken unto himself a young wife, a buxom pretty damsel, with a round, laughing face, a good set of teeth, a kind heart, and a merry eye. She bids fair to rival the rest of the matrons of this place in fecundity. The old gentleman was never half so proud as he is now, when ostentatiously nursing his chubby boy at his door, whenever the shop is empty of customers. He may frequently also be seen outside the shop, apparently amusing the child by showing him the various articles in the window; but in reality scrutinizing his own face in the glass, and endeavouring to trace the likeness of each feature of his own to those of his living portrait.

Between the ironmonger's shop, and the end of the street, there is nothing worth looking at. Round the corner is the "saddler and harness-maker's" abode. It is a double-fronted house, one shop being for the use of the saddler, the other for that of his wife, who sells crockery-ware, sweetmeats, toys, brushes, with a "va-

riety of other articles too numerous to be inserted," and all the infinity of a chandler's shop into the bargain. The saddler is a hard-working man, but the most inveterate news-monger and gossip that ever lived in this or any other town. His house is the head-quarters of that large class of people who delight in scandal and chit-chat. The shop is never empty, but frequently crowded with idle tale-bearers, who run in open-mouthed when they have a piece of intelligence to reveal to those who they know will receive it so gladly, and dreading lest they should lose the honour of the first relation.

The saddler is thin in his person, and snuffles, his voice too is whining, two decided advantages in a regular gossip which should be cultivated if possible. His wife is a different sort of being, large, tall, and corpulent, a lover of show, an aper of the genteel, one who dresses fine and talks finer. Her mode of speech is, indeed, wondrous fine, every word is drawn out "fine by degrees, and beautifully less," in a mincing tone, and with sundry ges-

ticulations of the head, and flourishes of the hands. Truly there is not a more lady-like personage in our town than this same saddler's wife, in her own opinion. She looks with scorn upon the head-schoolmaster's wife, because she once sold haberdashery, and was "born and bred in a shop;" whereas she, on the contrary, was "well brought up," and had a genteel "hedication." Her bosom friend is the hostess of "The King's Head," to whom she bears some resemblance in person and manners. Their intercourse is marked by a great deference towards each other, and a singular observance of politeness and etiquette. They know not how to be polite enough, and are quite scandalized at the rudeness and vulgarity of other people; but they derive much pleasure from the conviction that such folks are "hignorant," and were not "well brought up," as they have been. How they "yes, mem," and "no, mem," and compliment each other! N. B. at an early period of their lives they were both ladies'-maids.

"The King's Head" is next door to the

saddler's, and is the corner house of a very dark and miserable-looking lane, for which there is no name that I ever heard of, up which lives our little doctor and our great butcher. It runs parallel with the High-Street, and stands between that and the *back* street, at the corner of which is the residence of our "head-doctor," and next to that is the Poor-house, kept by a civil, obsequious, quiet, demure, and apparently religious fellow, that obtains his means by *starving* the poor, who are "done for" by him at so much per week, and fattening pigs.

Beyond the Poor-house are five or six messuages and tenements inhabited by working-people. Beside the last of these dwells the currier of this place, who hath lately succeeded his father in a tolerably good business, and who is a very honest, industrious, good kind of fellow. He has a neat, sharp-looking, and rather pretty sort of a wife, formerly lady's-maid to our rector's daughters, who blesses him annually with an addition to his family. Part of his house is occupied by one of the painters :

he is obliged to live away from his partner, who, to do him justice, is the most pugnacious of the two. The one of whom we now speak is in business the ornamental and decorative man. He has a great itch for spoiling good canvass, and, like our young ladies, is too much of a "genius" to submit to the influence of "rules." His "pictures" are therefore not remarkable for drawing or perspective, but they are eminently so for colouring. If he were to paint the figure of a man, he would dress him in a blue jacket, a red waistcoat, and yellow breeches, supported by green stockings, and surmounted by a cravat that would rival the rainbow, and all would be as bright and glaring as chrome yellow, vermilion, and Prussian blue could make them. Of shade he knows nothing; there is not the "shadow of a shade" in his productions, and his lights are the most convenient in the world, they shine on all sides of, and within and without every object. At every touch of the pencil he smiles, and walks backwards some paces to admire. He is a happy man.

We ought to have said that the currier's

dwelling was divided into three portions, each having its separate door and staircase. The remaining portion is occupied by the *ci-devant* post-boy at the Crown inn, who inspired the heart of his mistress's sister, with the "tender passion," and prevailed on her to forget the solitary miseries of widowhood, for she had lost her first husband, in a second edition of matrimony neatly "bound in calf," but neither "gilt, nor lettered." The widow, "nothing loth," smiled a sweet consent, and affronted her sister the jolly landlady, who was somewhat high in her notions, and curled up her nose at the post-boy with immense disdain. If any man condescend to ride a post-horse, he is a "boy," for the rest of his life. Our friend was somewhat beyond his fortieth year, but everybody called him the "post-boy;" and the late landlady could not brook the disgrace of having any relationship between them. "Where there is a *will* there is a *way*," as every one knows, and the hostess was cheated. She became reconciled to her fate, and not only admitted the "post-boy" to her house as a visitor, but she

advanced him money at a subsequent period, to commence the posting business on his own account, in opposition to the present landlord of "The Crown," which house she had sold for a good price, herself receiving a share of the profits of this latter speculation.

The post-boy has done very well since, and he and his rib live pretty comfortably,—she "ruling the roast," he submissively quiet as all "good husbands" should be. She is rather fond of her drops, and is then particularly good-humoured; it is only when she is getting sober that she is querulous and nervous. Alas! alas! a vile story is just whispered through the town. The post-boy has lost his reputation as a "good husband" for ever. He went home drunk himself yesterday, found his wife sober, she abused him for having indulged in that which he denied her, and he, rash man! he actually, to use his own phrase, "pum-melled her."

The "beer bill" did a great deal of mischief here, as well as in most other places. Everybody was anxious to keep a beer-shop or to

become brewers. The "post-boy" was eager to do both, and what was worse, he persuaded the hard-working currier to be his partner in the speculation. They began, but it was an unlucky affair. They could not give beer away, and nobody would buy it. The fact was, that the post-boy could ride better than he could brew. The beer turned sour, and he tried to reclaim it, first with chalk, then with soda, but he could not persuade the people it was fresh after all. Then he turned sour himself, and protested he knew not "what was come to people for his part, they were nicer now than they used to be." The brewery suddenly closed; when the exciseman made his usual call it was "silent," and silent it has always remained. Not so the post-boy's wife, or the currier's sharp lady. They have been noisy ever since. Each blames the other's husband for the failure, and the ladies are therefore always quarrelling. The latter abuses the former for getting drunk, the former calls the latter a "mean, spiritless creature" because she keeps sober. They are a perfect nuisance to the neigh-



bours, and the painter's wife has lately made up the trio. Now there is to be a regular division. The painter will not live amongst such people ; he is about to remove to the High Street, and is painting a huge something that he calls "Britannia and her lion," but which looks more like a fish-woman and a bull-dog, that he intends to place over his door, to indicate to all the world, and our town, that his house is the residence of an artist.

## THE PROFESSOR.

“The wisest schemes of men and mice  
Gang aft awry.”

BURNS.

THE next house to the *tria juncta in unam* is old, and out of repair, and has been the scene of some curious pranks while it was occupied by the late inhabitant. The father of this personage was a truly respectable, and much-respected character, who, although filling a humble situation in our town, was universally esteemed for his unassuming manners and his integrity, as well as for his benevolent kindness to the poor. He was for many years the parish clerk, for which he received the small stipend of twenty pounds per annum, with a small sum for the office of parish schoolmaster. In the latter office he had the privilege of educating

such of the children of the town whose parents would send them to his academy, and for which he was content with a lesser sum than was taken at the "head school," then kept by the father of our present curate. In course of time he had saved a considerable sum from his earnings, and with the advice and concurrence of his neighbours he opened a boarding-school, which, during a long series of years was very successful, and he finally left his academy to his youngest son, and divided his property between the latter, and two brothers who were previously established in the world, in equal proportions. These two young men were tolerably prosperous, and very respectable.

We will leave them to their fate, and turn our attention to the younger brother. When the old gentleman departed this life, this his favourite son was appointed by the authorities to the vacant office of parish clerk, which, for a short time he filled. It was not, however, to his taste; he was a very different person to his father, and "had a soul above buttons." Parish clerk indeed! About this time, too, he

discovered that he wanted a wife, and immediately began his search. But there was no young lady in or near our town with whom he could form a matrimonial alliance. The secret of this was, that he looked rather higher than his rank in life, and pretensions seemed to warrant, and when he made love to any of the damsels who were supposed likely to have fortune, they tittered, and cried "Amen."

The only chance he had was to go where he was not known, and thither he went accordingly. He engaged an usher to conduct the duties of his establishment in his absence, hired a black servant to wait upon himself on his journey, borrowed a gig and horse to carry both, and off he started, by easy stages, to that mart for the disposal of hearts — Bath. Arrived there, he took up good quarters, had a handsome card-plate engraved, on which was placed "Mr. —, Professor of Languages and the Belles Lettres." Now for a professor of languages to be whisking about the streets of Bath in a stylish gig, and attended by a black servant, was no joke. People took him

for somebody. He must be a man of talent and means. There was not much in his looks to be sure, save an unbounded impudence, but "appearances were so deceiving," people said there was no reliance upon them. Indeed, "The Professor" was a very ugly, diminutive, coxcombical fellow as you would need see, and under ordinary circumstances no woman would have looked at him, save to laugh; but his equipage put a different face upon things; the black servant settled the business.

That our professor was in search of a wife, we have said, and that there were plenty of women in Bath in search of husbands, we need not say. On one of these he fixed his eyes, and she fortunately fixed her eyes upon him. She was one of a large family of daughters, all unprovided for, whose mother had a fair income, and lived up to it. Both parties were eager to secure their expected happiness. The gentleman believed his intended had, or would have money, and feared lest any inquiries made by her friends should induce her to alter her opinion. He therefore sought a clandestine union, and

the lady, who had sundry qualms of a similar nature, was induced to give her consent. *We* will not say that either party had told that which was *false* concerning their expectations, but both of them had certainly concealed the *truth*; if their subsequent recriminations might be listened to, they had done much more.

Married they were, and the friends of the lady *forgave* them. They returned to the professor's abode to spend the honey-moon. The lady was horrified. The shattered old house, the soiled furniture, the gang of dirty boys, and above all, to learn that she was but the wife of a *ci-devant* parish clerk, threw her into a fit of the vapours. Where she had expected to be treated with respect, and in a circle far superior to that to which she had been used, she found herself regarded with contempt. She was solitary and miserable. Her husband, who had hopes of her purse, did all in his power to remedy these disasters. He incurred great expense to get up a party, and was mad enough to invite the rector, under whose nose he had so often cried "Amen," with his aristocratical

wife and daughters, and all the members of the "upper class of society" about our town to his feast. He was mad enough to believe they would accept the invitation, and kept the dinner waiting till an hour after the time specified. The good lady wondered why her husband's friends did not arrive. She spoke to him on the subject; told him what he was just beginning to suspect himself—that they would not come. What *could* be the meaning of it? The professor was in despair. To prevent any unpleasant surmises on the part of his wife, he hastily despatched a boy here, another there, and a servant to another place, to invite all the petty tradesmen and their wives, to enjoy the good things he had provided. The dinner was transformed into a supper, and devoured accordingly. The lady of the house did not relish her company, and went to bed because she had a "sick headache."

The "professor" still went on in an expensive and reckless career, relying upon the property he should get with his wife, and the tradesman who had partaken of his nuptial

feast gave him credit upon the representations he had made. The bills grew large, the tradesmen wanted money, the professor had none, and intimated as much to his wife. She was thunderstruck. "What was to be done?" she inquired. The husband replied, that "what her friends intended to give her they must give *then*." Her answer nearly killed the professor. "They had nothing to give." For some minutes he was incapable of utterance, he was petrified with horror. The lady pitied him a little, and herself a great deal more. Then came a storm. They quarreled long and loud, but it was useless, and so they found. The "professor" began to suspect that abusing his wife would not pay his debts, and they accordingly came to a very philosophical conclusion that, as both had tried to deceive, and had been deceived, the best that could then be done was to say nothing about it, to save being laughed at.

This was very prudent; but servants have ears and tongues. All the scene was told, with additions and embellishments innumerable,



and laughed at they were heartily. The belle of the Pump-rooms then settled down into a slatternly housewife. She had been brought up in a "genteel" way, and could consequently do nothing that was required of her. Her appearance was a combination of finery and dirt, and she soon became sickly-looking, and haggard. The tradesmen were with difficulty resigned to their fate. They consented to "wait," and wait they did, and still do.

To make up for the scantiness of his income as a schoolmaster, which was very unequal to his increased expenditure, and to obtain society for his wife more congenial to her refined taste than the plain, homely wives of the tradesmen, who, to confess the truth, began to grow shy when they found that the costly entertainments given by the "professor" were "on credit," and that their husbands might, after all, be called upon to pay for them, the schoolmaster resolved to import some strangers into our town in the shape of "parlour boarders." A curious importation he made of it, and some curious vagaries were the result, as a poet, at

present of some celebrity, could testify if he pleased. The good lady had also commenced a "select seminary for young ladies," which was carried on under the same roof as the "establishment for young gentlemen,"—"parlour boarders," and all were huddled together in a strange medley. This house has been partly described, and in print, by the clever pen of the poet before alluded to, and some sly cuts were given in his sketch at some of our good people, but his memory must have sadly failed him when he wrote.

However, all the efforts of the disappointed couple to disembarass themselves by their united occupations were unavailing. The "parlour boarders" did not pay, they decamped one by one, leaving the "professor" only deeper in the slough of debts. One of these worthies, a Captain (*soi-disant*) in His Majesty's service, came there with an immense chest, so filled with property that four men were employed in the difficult task of getting it up-stairs. The "Captain" was a very insinuating sort of person; he flattered the ladies, drank and ate with

the gentlemen, praised the pigs, was delighted with our town, its walks and prospects, and pronounced our bacon the finest in the world. Being a captain was sufficient introduction. He went everywhere, everybody was pleased with him, he shot over any ground he fixed his eye upon, rode anybody's horse, got into everybody's debt. In short he did as he pleased. When the time came for payment he gave promises, talked largely of expectations, connexions, and other advantages, but there was nothing tangible. He knew all the "great folks" in the country, but unfortunately, as it afterwards appeared, none of them knew him.

One "quarter" — two "quarters" — *three* "quarters," no money. A *fourth* quarter, ditto. The "professor" wanted money, of course, but he was an easy sort of fellow, whose vanity was flattered by the captain, and he would have been flattered on for another four quarters, and put off his tradesmen as he had been put off himself; but he could not do exactly as he liked. What married man can? The lady of the house had strange thoughts,

and she told the captain so, in spite of her husband's fears of offending the *militaire*. "Let him be offended, if he would, what cared she?" The "captain" was a "bold man." He *was* offended. He would write to his agent, get the money, and leave the house. The "professor" entreated he would not think of it, the "captain" swore he would; the "professor" was in an agony, he soothed the captain at last into a promise that he would not put his threat into execution. *Five* quarters, no money. The lady wouldn't stand it any longer. The "professor" and herself quarreled over the matter. The "captain" overheard the storm, and played his cards accordingly. Next morning he received a letter, which he said contained advices of a large sum that was to arrive that day week. The lady was pacified, and all things went on smoothly.

The captain went out shooting the next day; he had good sport, and returned home with an abundance of game, part of which he gave his host, and the other part he designed for some friends. Would the "professor" be so kind

as to lend him two or three hampers to forward the game? "Oh! certainly, with the greatest pleasure," only the professor feared "the hampers he had would be larger than the captain wished." "Not at all, they were the very thing." If game was packed too closely it was liable to "heat," and turn before it was opened. He would thank the professor to let him have the hampers that night, as he would send off the game the following morning by the London coach. It was done. The captain was up very early, as was likely upon such an occasion; the game was packed up, and to be certain that it was delivered safely to the coachman, he would go with the man employed to convey it himself. The London coach passes two miles from our town, the hampers were conveyed in a cart, and they were there some time before the coach came up, because, as the captain justly observed, "it was better to have to wait some few minutes than to miss the coach, as the *game would then be spoiled*." And as he was there to attend to it himself, there was no reason for detaining the carter;

he was given a glass of something to drink, and sent off with the assurance that he would be paid on application to the captain, or if he should *not* be in the way the "professor" would pay him.

The captain did not return to breakfast, nor to dinner, tea, nor supper, nor did he get home to bed. He had met with some friends, and would be home to-morrow; he had often stopped out unexpectedly. "Hang the captain," said the professor's lady. "I do not want to hear about *him*, can you tell me about my dear cat? Where can he have gone to? He has not been seen since the night the captain gave you the game. I *hope* nothing has happened to *him*, he is such a *nice, dear* creature."

It was very strange, but nobody had seen the cat since that memorable night. Search was made, rewards offered, in vain. The "professor's" lady, the servant, and an old washer-woman were hoarse, and had sore throats, by calling "puss, puss," for five or six hours every night, but no "puss" came. The lady was in despair. One, two, three, four, five, — eight, nine days passed, and neither captain

nor cat came. The cat was given up; of the captain, the professor had yet some hope. The lady had none. She caused enquiries to be made, which her husband said were needless, as the captain's chest still remained as heavy as ever, neither he nor the servant together could move it an inch, it was so full. The fact of the captain's departure was ascertained. He had gone off with the game. A consultation was held. Friends advised that the captain should be informed by advertisement, that unless he "took away the things left behind him, they would be sold to defray the expenses" of his board and lodging. No notice was taken of this, and in time the chest was broken open. It contained the *skeleton of the lost cat*, which had been starved to death therein, and the mystery of its apparent weight was explained by the fact of its being *screwed to the floor*. The captain had packed up his property in the hampers along with the game, and had paid his debts, and revenged himself upon the lady by depriving her of her feline favourite at the same time.

Sundry losses of a similar nature, and his

own recklessness, reduced the "professor" to complete insolvency. He sold his furniture to the *head* shopkeepers by a bill of sale, for part of the debt he owed them. Finally, he borrowed a hint from the captain. He left the place deeply involved with all who "had faith," and actually borrowed some candle-boxes of the shopkeepers, in which he conveyed off the most valuable and portable of the furniture he had sold. He went to the West Indies, where the pump-room belle followed him, accompanied by two children, the fruits of their happy marriage.

We have said enough of "odds and ends." You have seen the whole of our town now, courteous reader, what think you of it? The *high-street*, the *back-street*, and the lane between the two, with a lane at one end, and something like a street at the other, running in transverse directions, complete the map. So much for the survey. Now prepare we for higher game.



## BEAUTY.

## THE BEAUTIES OF "OUR TOWN."

WHAT is beauty? I have asked this question of a hundred persons, myself included, and have never received a satisfactory answer. I have sought beauty in a thousand forms, ways, and places, and have found it in all. As Cicero said of study, "it is with me at home and abroad." But if I were required to describe beauty I should be sorely puzzled. I might be pleased with my attempt, though I doubt it much, but that I should never please anybody else, Lord Eldon himself would not "doubt."

To describe the beauties of nature one must begin by seeing with the eyes open, and finish by seeing with the eyes shut, neither of which

happens to be so easy as is generally imagined. Every man that hath eyes to see, may see to be sure, but to see correctly is another thing. Open his eyes as widely as he may, he will find it a difficult matter. The vast multiplicity of objects which will be impressed upon the retina are enough to bewilder the clearest. The fact is, we view most things through a medium of our own, which destroys the harmony of nature, and we become conglomerated and mist-blind. In seeing with one's eyes shut, every image which has been received when they were open, must be viewed by the mind as they are reflected by the mirror of vision, *veluti in speculum*, and then, ay then indeed! the mist becomes thicker and thicker. We disarrange, remove, transform, disfigure, detract, heighten, put a false light here, a too deep shade there, and so forth, till we destroy all proportion, and render beauty a heterogeneous medley. If anybody doubt this, let him or her ascend the next eminence, take a view of surrounding nature, beaming in all her luxuriant

brightness, and then, come down and tell us all about it.

The truth of the matter is simply this, though many may not admit it, a few only of mankind are privileged by nature to view her as she ought to be viewed, and to paint her in her true colours. Men of genius only, and that too of the highest order, form this class. They, whether the poet or the painter, for there must be poetry in the latter to be excellent, *see* the beauties of nature, and *feel* them, and once *felt*, they are never to be forgotten. Through the progress of years from boyhood to maturity, each bright image has been gathered up by the man of genius with innate delight, and treasured in his enraptured soul with fervent tenacity. He hath seen her in all her varied aspects, and from each has received pleasures of the sweetest and holiest kind; he dwells upon them with a grateful sense of their purity. They are never to be erased from his memory, for they are fixed there by Love. Since his mind has known

the quality of perception, or his soul felt the beamings of moral and intellectual thought, he hath dwelt upon nature and her works, he hath observed that which others saw not, he hath felt those things which others heeded not, and all are inclosed within the recesses of his own happy bosom. He hath looked upon nature as a parent, he hath regarded her as a child. He feels that she is a part of himself, and when we read his ever-varied, ever-sweet communings with her, we also feel that she is so.

Let such a man describe nature to us, and we are delighted. We note a thousand things we never before noted, and yet wonder how we missed them. We trace genius in every sentence, soul in every thought, and love in every sentiment. We read on with increased delight and gratitude, and when we close the book it is with respect for the author, and regret that we have arrived at its end. We fondly turn to it again, from time to time, discover fresh beauties in every perusal, and endeavour to prove our admiration by fixing them firmly in our mind.

Let a man who hath *not* genius lisp his rhyme and tell his tale—pish! we are instantly sick.

Let us return to the point from whence we started. What is beauty—personal beauty? tell me that. In what does it consist? The monkey, if he could speak, would reply “in a tail;” the fox who had lost that appendage argued that it consisted in not having one. The prince of darkness might say that horns were the perfection of beauty; married men would insist upon the reverse. A tall and thin person regards length as the true criterion of beauty, a short and thick one breadth, and the middle-sized swear it is neither one nor the other. Some young ladies admire an erect and even carriage; but a lady of “our town” advocates a stooping gait and an undulating, up-and-down sort of movement. This lady waltzed much in opposition to a numerous body, and now does all in her power to restore waltzing:—mem. she is round-shouldered, and has one leg shorter than the other. Another lady of “our town” directly asserts that beauty

lies in rotundity ; but I have a notion her opinion is not quite impartial. She weighs rather more than fifteen stone.

Indeed, all the opinions I have ever heard upon the subject have been more or less tinged by the personal peculiarities of those who advanced them. Men who have an abundance of hair wear terrible whiskers ; those to whom nature has not been so bountiful condemn the practice as beastly. From this last opinion, however, we must generally exempt the young ladies of *both* sexes, as they are apt to imagine a profusion of hair upon the face manly and denoting manhood. If so, what dreadful fellows some of the bucks of the nineteenth century must be ! unless they buy their hairy ornaments. N. B. A very good pair of mustachios costs about eighteen-pence. Who would be at the trouble of growing them ? It would cost ten times as much to manure some soils before a single root would strike.

By the way, in the prints and paintings that I have seen of our first progenitor, Father Adam, his chin has been as bare as his wife's,

as if Eve in her tantrums had pulled his beard out *vi et armis*. Macassar oil and bear's grease were not then known, it may be presumed, otherwise Adam had been better clad. "Rowland's Genuine" would make hairs grow on flint-stones. It is said that the vessels in which he mixes it, after twice using, sprout forth abundantly, and that great part of his profits is made by selling the crop.

I have been led into this rambling course of remarks by an intention which I had of giving a sort of general sketch of the beauties of "our town" and its vicinity, as I have previously done in regard to the architectural characteristics of the place. But it is a tender subject, and, alas! a barren one. I would fain relinquish it; but, having gone so far, like a man in a bog, I cannot recede. But as any one in that delicate situation would be glad of assistance, however feeble, so will I avail myself of the kindness of the reader, who, perhaps, will not require too minute a criticism. Indeed, there are those who might deem it impertinent. There is no wisdom in drawing a nest of hor-

nets upon one's head, and I have bethought me, since I commenced this chapter, of the cow that tossed the beehive and was stung to death for her pains.

But to go on. People who have *l'amour propre*, which the French people happily term the love of portraits, do not like to have their features too closely detailed. Cromwell, it is true, insisted upon fidelity, carbuncles, and all ; but there are no Cromwells in "our town." It is said, also, that Ninon de l'Enclos, even when at an advanced age, refused a portrait because the painter had represented her as younger and fairer than she was ; but, so far as I know the ladies of "our town," there is not a Ninon de l'Enclos amongst them, though in candour it should be added, there are many who would be if it were possible. Taking, therefore, the characteristics of the ground I have to sketch into consideration, I shall proceed cautiously, and only give the more prominent traits.

Lord Byron said that he could never prevail upon a lady to tell him her age. In *this* respect I have the honour to resemble his



lordship. I have been equally unfortunate. It may be expected that in "our town" and parish, which contains above four thousand inhabitants, there are ladies of all ages. No such thing. I have made the most careful inquiry, during several years' residence amongst them, and I have ascertained there is a point on the scale of years beyond which the ladies of this neighbourhood never go. Some of them, it must be admitted, have remained stationary at the points they have fixed upon a considerable time. Our "little doctor's" wife, for instance, was eight-and-twenty when I first entered the town, now eight years and upwards since, and she is still "eight-and-twenty." It is wonderful, when a lady gets to a certain age, what a period elapses before she gets twelve months older! That year is the longest of all years, and often reaches from time to eternity.

"Truth," they say, "lies in a well." I have found it in the grave. I have been very inquisitive, I must own. I have gone to one or two funerals as Captain Ross went to the north-

pole, on a voyage of discovery, and I arrived there at the truth by taking a glance at the plates on the coffin lids. But I could never reconcile the difference between the vast sum total then made up, and the petty account given by the good creatures when they were living. On one side or the other there must have been gross miscalculation; but errors will arise in figures, as everybody knows, and as Mr. Joseph Hume knows in particular.

The circumstances above related prevent me from giving my sketches in the order I had originally contemplated. Deeply imbued with the respect due to age, I wished to begin with the old, but in truth, that is as they tell it, there are none of them old. If I call them elderly they will look askew. I am perplexed. It will not do to say "those who are not so young as they have been," for they one and all strive to appear as young as ever. What *shall* I call them?

I have it. Those who were born first, they all covet precedence, are various in their personal peculiarities, some stout, some thin;

some short, some tall; some between both. But they approximate more closely in habits. They like green tea, and love scandal. Hyson and back-biting are their supreme enjoyments. They love whist too, not for the game itself however, for their thoughts are on higher subjects, but for the intervals of scandal which the deals afford them. Oh! how they doat on ripping up a neighbour's character. It is the salt of life, life itself. Nobody escapes. Let the crevice be ever so small, they wriggle themselves into it, like a whip-snake getting through the keyhole of a Brahmin's temple, till they see and know all, and more than all, and then the venomous bite of the reptile above alluded to is not more deadly than the poison of their tongues. They take much pleasure in marriages, making those they wish for in their own families, and marring those they dislike in others. The calving of a cow and the birth of an infant are alike objects of interest. In a death they rejoice, they can say what they please of those who are gone too far off to return and defend themselves.

Those who came into the world after them are evidently scions of the old stock, on whom certain manners and habits have been engrafted, arising from the difference of time and education. The hours which their progenitors spent in darning stockings, and the other branches of the sober, demure, and solid education of females in the last century, are occupied by the more juvenile race in acquiring accomplishments, as they are called, and in reading novels and romances.

In person it is rare to see one who has airs and graces, but on the other hand it should be said it is not so rare to see a lady in her airs. Those who have blessed the opposite sex by becoming wives exhibit this peculiarity somewhat often. They still, however, love to be courted, and they receive the homage which they extort from their enduring slaves, as a coquettish pigeon bears the uxorious fondness of her mate—with poutings and bridlings, at the same time not valuing it for the thing itself, but for the triumph it affords them. They take infinite pains to show off the inferiority of

their husbands, and the assumed superiority of themselves, though in nine cases out of ten the said superiority consists only in a larger stock of impudence. This is particularly the case in matters of sentiment. Married ladies do not seem to admire sentiment in husbands. Can it be more agreeable to find it elsewhere?

But after all, a man that has committed matrimony can have little business with such matters. The sooner he sinks down into a quiet, unobservant, good-sort-of-man, the better for his own peace, and his wife's enjoyments. He should not be cognisant of what passes round him, he has no right to be so, his wife never intended it. Every husband ought by law to be compelled to furnish his wife with an invisible cloak, in which she might act according to her own free powers of volition and inclination without being seen. If children spring up, it is his place to provide for them, not to be inquisitive about trifles. Let him take care of property that his partner may have all she requires, but he should not interfere with family matters. It is petty, and frivolous; it

is vexatious, and apt to disturb the comfort and happiness of his spouse, which no man ought to do. The liberty of the subject is not to be trifled with, or infringed upon. The legislature should prevent such doings. Matters would arrive at great perfection indeed, if wives were only allowed to do as husbands pleased. The world would be turned upside-down with a vengeance. But the independence of spirit natural to the sex has happily done much to repress the tyranny of man, and long may they enjoy the privileges they have so boldly attained !

The unmarried ladies of our town are not so remarkable for loveliness as might be desirable. It is but fair to say that I am not expressing *their* opinion on the subject, nor that of their mammas. They are, for the most part, "half pertness, half pout;" regard disdain as a characteristic of gentility, and scorn everything but what they affect themselves. Those who have not finished their education, and return home during their vacations, have a milk-and-water aspect. They are slender, not exactly

sylph-like. Eating, however, is their ruin, when they are at home, and can indulge. Those who are "quite finished," as their parents have it, gradually assume the hue of melted butter. They become bilious, and see all things with a jaundiced eye. "Nonsense." "How stupid!"—"Tiresome."—"Trash," are their common exclamations, and supersede the plain "Yes Ma," and "No Ma," which before they were *finished* were all that could be got from them.

They get a fit of indigestion, and talk of *ennui*; yawn listlessly over the last new romance, and affect to criticise. They go "deeper and deeper still," and at length condemn all and sundry. Even Scott got worse and worse with them; but, now he is dead, of course he is the greatest genius that ever lived. They practise "oriental tinting," and produce things with long antennæ and large wings, which they call butterflies. They draw landscapes without perspective, and condemn rules as fetters to genius. They paint heads too—such heads!—and they ask you to examine their produc-

tions. You do, and shudder. A dropsical Cupid and a bloated Mercury, apparently five-and-twenty stone in weight, are their *chef-d'œuvres*. Fishes are exhibited that look stale and parboiled; birds of gaudy plumage and long, sweeping tails; and animals that no naturalist has ever yet discovered. Such things were never in the heavens above, the earth beneath, nor the waters under the earth. Their mammas tell how long they were learning their "accomplishments." How many lessons they took (about a fourth of the real number), and of whom they took them. Then follow all the fine things the "masters" *said*, but not a word of what the "masters" *did*.

Of all the things in the world there is none so ill-used as a piano-forte. Talk of donkies! they have had a bed of roses in comparison. Messrs. Broadwood, ye have much to answer for. How many unfortunate, defenceless instruments have ye sent forth into the wide world only to be abused and thumped worse than parish-apprentices! Verily, Messrs. Broadwood, ye have made some noise in the world!



You are not only noisy in yourselves, but you are the cause of noise in others. How many heads have you set aching? how many sets of nerves have you destroyed? How many eardrums have you split? how many pious men have you made swear? How many persons have you driven from their homes? how many have you driven to distraction? How many innocent babes have you disturbed from their sweet slumbers? how many dogs have you made howl? How many girls have you caused to make fools of themselves? how many admiring lovers have you sent into fits? how many myriads of stockings have you kept from being darned? Tell me that, ye carvers of wood and spinners of metal! Better ye had never been born. Why have ye not been indicted for breaking the peace? Why do the "paid" and the "unpaid" allow you to "go on and prosper" in your wickedness. Hath Joseph Hume never thought of "reform" where it was really wanted? Or are ye patronised by Dan. O'Connell as "agitators?" Myriads yet unborn will rue your existence. You have

spread a plague among us, and the sins you have caused the mothers to commit will be perpetuated from generation to generation.

How easy it is to become loquacious on a sore subject ! The truth is, I care not who knows it, I hate amateur-music and amateur-musicians. I would have it made punishable, by fine and imprisonment, for any one to play in the hearing of others who could not play well. I know I am not on the popular side—I know I am on dangerous ground, and I feel my position. I care not a rush ; I will brave any man in a cause like this. If any amateur dispute what I have said, I will not go so far as to make him eat his own words ; but it shall be a miracle if I do not make him swallow his own fiddle. I could die content if I could make these earless, heartless, soulless creatures quiver, as their quaverings have made me quiver. I could resign my breath with calmness and composure if more than one fiddler that I know were choked with their own fiddlesticks. I am no stoic. I never can think of an amateur-musician with temper.

Our young ladies do much towards the annoyance of people like myself. They are encouraged in it by their sagacious mammas, who thus think to show off their daughters' education to advantage. They have recourse to this expedient in winter particularly. "The evenings are very long," they complain, adding, justly enough, "let us have a little music to *kill time*." Then come the variations of Mazzinghi, Kiallmark, and the rest of that tribe, interspersed with the "Storm Rondo" and the eternal "Battle of Prague," which only gives way to the "battle of tongues." Then we have "Bid me discourse" and "Sweet Home," the bitterest dose of all. While these maternal tactics are exercised, in order that the fair demoiselles may entrap some "young man who has every qualification to render the married state happy," to use the comprehensive phrase of their assiduous mothers, all conversation, instructive or agreeable, good, bad, or indifferent, is banished the house. If you do manage to get into a political discussion with an elderly gentleman who may sit beside you, ten

to one the hostess knocks up a quadrille to the music of the hapless piano, and your elderly friend, in the midst of an oration intended to enlighten you, is stopped by having his mouth full of the dust they have kicked up, and he is set coughing for that hour at least, while you are pushed and knocked about the shabby little room as if you were only a shuttlecock.

Then, to mend the matter, and to crown your evening with perfect delight, some young man who is poor, and therefore has no business to love or to be beloved, engages the attention of the very daughter on whose account all this fuss has been made by the anxious hostess. The young lady is amused, pleased, and her heart, if not quite palpitating, begins to inform its mistress that she has such a thing belonging to her. The old lady is fuming; she may be compared to a hen whose solitary chick gets too near the gaping jaws of a cat. She tries gentle means first, for she is unwilling to offend the "poor young man," because he "plays so *very* nicely on the flute," and "*really* accompanies the piano very well;" but such goings

on as these are not to be permitted. "He hasn't a guinea in the world, the poor beggarly fellow!" The good lady then nudges her daughter without effect. She pretends to adjust one of her ringlets, under cover of which she in reality pulls a hair or two pretty sharply. The only effect this produces is the audible whisper, "How tiresome you *are*, mamma!" At last the old lady fairly pounces in and takes off the young lady, who, out of spite, swears she is suddenly seized with a headache, and the party is broken up.

So it is and so it will be, and to moralize upon it would be useless. Talents and integrity are nothing in comparison with dross. What are virtues to guineas? The latter are all the world to nothing. With the first you are warned off the ground like a man who presumes to sport without being qualified, and receive contempt and scorn in a quarter where of all others it is the hardest to endure it. Get the last—Heaven knows how, and no matter, since nobody will care—and you may walk in, hang up your hat, kick your heels against the

best carpet, sprawl your long legs upon the sofa, and say, without fear of contradiction, "That girl is mine if I like." There is only one thing that a man can do without money — it is vain to attempt anything else, but the sooner he does that the better—*i. e.* make himself the interesting subject of a coroner's inquest. If he wishes to enjoy posthumous fame, let him pen two or three wild stanzas to the "pangs of ill-requited love," and a valedictory and maledictory address to life, and he will have the satisfaction of figuring in the newspapers as an "unfortunate gentleman whose genius was of the highest order."

Of "marriageable young ladies," there is a somewhat large proportion in our little town. But if they have not been successful they have done more—they have deserved to be so. They are warmly inclined towards matrimony, and it is somewhat dangerous for any other than a benedict to look at them. A young flute-playing sailor, whose musical propensities frequently leads him into our circles, and whose intimacy with rocks may have made him appre-

hensive of syrens, takes care to state publicly; in order to save unnecessary trouble, that he is not a marrying man. He thus destroys the charm that his sun-burnt countenance, and his long absences from home may possess, and though he “plays the flute like an angel,” and accompanies the ladies divinely in “*Di tanti palpiti*,” he is suffered to pass unmolested. “Mr. B — is *very well*; but he has *strange* ideas of matrimony, and would *certainly never* make a good husband.” So said the young ladies, and so said the old ones. I believe they were right. What *good* could be expected of a music-mad sailor? His captain told him, on his voyage “homeward-bound,” that he was “only fit to whistle jigs to mile-stones,” he might have added, that mile-stones were the only things his jigs were fit to be whistled to.

But we have said enough of one sex. Now turn we to the other. What, however, shall be said of the men of our town? Even Sterne himself must have admitted that “all was barren” here. It is not uncommon in the great world to meet with men who appear as

if they never could by any increase of years be made to look old. It is not so with us. The men in this place, for the most part, look as if they never had been young. They wear the aspect of the offspring of age, ill-humour, or solemn nonsense. In imagination they are blank, and they fill up the vacuum by ridiculous gravity. They "sit like their grandsires cut in alabaster." Their intellects are not "span-like," they have not so much compass.

It cannot even be said that all of them are "people with one idea." They have a set of floating notions swimming about in that void which is usually filled by brains, of "reform," national debt, taxation, "universal suffrage," whig ministry, tory opposition, (we are all radicals here,) the prices of markets, and such matters; but they are like the planetary system of Des Cartes, each crosses the other as they whirl about in their vortexes, until they are all jumbled together in an inseparable mass. When they have enlarged by the hour, as they sometimes do, upon any or all of their favourite subjects, with every good-natured de-



sire to give them credit for meaning something, you are nevertheless sadly puzzled to know what.

Sentiment or wit they know not, but they understand fattening pigs correctly. They will tell you to a gallon how much barley-meal a hog will require, and will guess the weight of the bloated beast within half-a-score. They think much of the inward man. They "despise thin potations." Their fleshly indulgences are great. In malt-liquors they delight. Water they look upon with contempt; and, hence, their ablutions are not frequent. Each man fats his own pork, and eats it till he almost rivals his swine in obesity. They exercise little, and sleep much. They marry and have children because other people do the same. Custom has rendered a family a matter of course, therefore they have one. Getting a wife and getting a pig excite about the same emotions. They creep through life, to quote an expressive phrase from Prior, "in a kind of — as it were." They love their families as well as they are capable of loving any thing,

but they are, or seem to be, physically cold, and all their passions seem to belong to the antarctic circles. What Parry endured in the frozen zones would be felt by the young and affectionate girl, whose bosom teemed with the idea of "mutual and partaken bliss," that rashly placed her love and hope on them. But they are "good-sort-of-men," for all that, and when they have clever ruling wives, make "good husbands," that is, they are indifferent, and allow their wives their "own way."

THE  
DASHAWAY ADMINISTRATION.

“ Mutare vel timere sperno.”

IT may excite a smile, but it is nevertheless true, that we have politics, and intrigues, cabals, and revolutions, in our town, as well other people, and *we* deem them matters of great importance. They may appear nonsense to those of the world beyond us, but if we knew it, we should only wonder at, and pity them. We declaim, bribe, and intrigue with all our hearts; and plot, conspire, elect, and re-elect; “ resolve, and re-resolve,” and fume ouselves to death if we are defeated. The idol of our praise to-day is the object of our worst abuse to-morrow. We enjoy the highest gratification when we set it up, and our feel-

ings are of the same description when we kick it down. Indeed the anticipation of that catastrophe is enjoyed at the time, perhaps, more than we should care to acknowledge.

Popularity is evanescent as everybody knows, and people cannot be expected to admire for ever. Nothing so delightful as a change, even if it be for the worse. For ourselves, when we elect a member, although it be only a parish constable, we derive satisfaction in knowing that we can turn him out, and that in fact we are merely setting him on an eminence, like a man in the pillory, that we may pelt at him when we please. Whether it be a constable or a county-member, it is pretty much the same. What we should do without the latter heaven only knows. Our bile would accumulate like the filth of the Augean stable, had we not such a subject to vent it upon. How it eases one when, on rising in the morning in a fit of downright ill-humour, when every person about us has been so perverse as to do everything properly, and leave us nothing to grumble at — how it eases one then to take up the paper and find that the

member was absent on the last division. There is at once something at which we have a legitimate and a virtuous right to be indignant. Oh how we give it him ! We do not spare him — not we. We abuse then in earnest — till our breath fail us, and then we stick our hands in our breeches pockets, and walk forth, with the air of men who have done their duty as patriots, to call upon every one we know, and raise their voices, like our own, against the delinquent. But let us return.

What poor Sir John Cam was to Westminster, Mrs. Dashaway was to “our town.” They were both exalted, both for a time idolized, and both had their “decline and fall.” Both talked of the “sacrifices” they had made — pish ! — who cared about them ? Did ever anybody care about sacrifices, or those who made them, after they were made ? Mrs. Dashaway and Sir John Cam both told the people they were ungrateful, and how could they tell them anything else ? Who ever found out a people that were not ungrateful ? Mem.—all people are ungrateful when they won’t do as

we wish. But it is better not to anticipate; and we will proceed regularly.

Mrs. Dashaway had seen a long and chequered life. At a very early age—very early, indeed, if her own account be a correct one, she did what all young ladies do if they can—she married. As *she* states, the circumstance happened thus. Her first victim was a physician in the East India—I beg pardon, the *Honourable* East India Company's service, who, having acquired some cash and a liver complaint together, arrived in England to get rid of them. He there beheld the lovely and innocent Mrs. Dashaway, then "sweet fifteen," and rich in all a maiden's bloom. After a short courtship they were united in the bonds of matrimony, and they subsequently returned to India, where Mrs. Dashaway gave birth to a son, who inherited a queer liver from his father, and whose face now looks like a shrivelled olive. The physician "went the way of all flesh;" an East Indian climate, a liver complaint, and, to crown all, a wife, were too much for him. He endured this accumulation of

evils about fifteen months — enough to prove his heroism beyond a doubt, and then resigned his breath without a murmur.

After this “happy release,” Mrs. Dashaway remained some time a young and lovely widow, the delight of the *élite* of Bengal, the idol of rajahs and nabobs, the envy of all the women, and the death of at least half the men, including one or two presidents, one governor-general, and a camp full of officers. All of these she had successively repulsed, but at length she saw her second husband in the tall and graceful person of Mr. Dashaway, with whom she fell terribly in love because—he had a nose like the Duke of Wellington’s. Mrs. Dashaway, be it known, is a great admirer of the Duke, and the simple ornament of the Wellington proboscis in her husband’s face was enough to make her turn aside from rank, wealth, and fame, and accept the more humble offer of Mr. D.

She “made him happy,” (the reader will remember that the lady’s version is here given,) and afterwards gave him “two dear delight-

ful pledges of her fond affection ;” but, oh ! how provoking ! neither of whom have the Wellington nose. The girl is short, fat, and carrotty ; her mamma, with true maternal kindness, calls her auburn, and a well-rounded figure ; her nose is decidedly pug, and Mrs. D. admits this feature to be very unlike her favourite model, though she really never could account for it. The boy is a long-legged, romantic stripling, with a pale face, and a nose like the edge of a razor, but no more like the Duke’s frontispiece than is an elephant’s trunk. Poor Mrs. Dashaway ! she certainly was very unfortunate in regard to the affair of noses, it must be confessed, and she often used to sigh over them, and, as the young lady’s governess used to assert, she was in the habit of pulling her daughter’s nasal organ till it was as red as a mulberry, and her eyes streamed with brine. The young lady grew wiser by experience, and took the precaution of anointing the feature with the rose-oil that was purchased by her mamma for her hair, and thus obstinately frus-



trated the fond maternal attempts to reshape her nose after the Wellington fashion.

After the birth of the "pledges," Mrs. D. and her husband, who was a dignitary of the church, returned home, and resided in England till "death deprived her of her heart's dearest treasure." "Domestic happiness" killed Mr. Dashaway, that is certain, for Mrs. D. protests he never knew anything else; but men will get tired even of bliss, inconstant as they are, and when the honey surfeits us, what can we do better than fly from the hive? Poor Mrs. D. was again a widow, and, alas! she remained so. In this brief sketch of Mrs. D.'s early life, her own account has been strictly copied; but as there are always two sides to a question, the popular version shall be given. The reader is left to determine, if he can, which is correct. It shall merely be premised that the following is what everybody but Mrs. D. says and believes to be true.

Mrs. Dashaway, say they, was a girl who carried her fortune in her face, and, in order to

make the most of it, was sent out to India by her friends to make a matrimonial speculation, in which she so far succeeded as to conclude an arrangement with a surgeon in the Company's service, with whom she contrived to reside till her extravagances had lessened his means, and enlarged his liver so immoderately, that there was nothing left him but to die as soon as he thought proper. This he did after leaving the remnant of his property in the hands of trustees, for the benefit of his jaundiced son, now a music-mad sailor in the Honourable East India Company's service, that is to say, a third mate, a stower of coffee.

After the demise of the Esculapian officer the good lady mourned herself into the arms of a second husband, who was somebody's chaplain, and as extravagant as herself. The result need hardly be told. Their means and credit were soon exhausted, and for some time the chaplain was lodged in durance vile. They then lived long upon the charity of friends, and the faith of butchers, and by listening to the advice of the former, and making smooth

promises to the latter, they contrived to wheedle something out of both, which, with the pittance of the chaplain's curacy, enabled them to rub on till Mr. Dashaway died, as it seemed only to save himself from a second visit to His Majesty's gaol of —. He was buried by the contributions of his friends, and poor Mrs. Dashaway again relapsed into widowhood and weeds; in the former she still continues, the latter were quickly discarded. Then it was that she resolved to retire from active life, and in her choice of a place of abode fixed in her condescension upon "our town."

This was no doubt exceedingly gracious on her part, and so, indeed, the inhabitants long deemed it. She was idolised, and panegyrised, in return for which she patronised. A spirit like that which dwelt within the frail covering of flesh, which constituted the grosser part of Mrs. Dashaway, could not be content with an inferior station on earth. She was one of those who would rather be the first in a place too caloric to be named, than the second in heaven. Many who are gifted with a redundancy

of words, and whose capabilities in other respects are scant, finding themselves naturally enough laid on the shelf in superior circles, suddenly withdraw themselves, and, in a pot-house, harangue by the hour upon the want of justice their talents have experienced, the persecutions they have undergone from the envious, and sundry other hardships, too numerous to mention, till they have set the eyes, ears, and mouths of their humble hearers open in astonishment, and for a time are looked upon as vastly clever. They are courted by everybody, and almost worshipped. Their smiles and nods are marks of distinction which are sought by all ; and to be seen in an apparently confidential intercourse, or walking arm-in-arm with them, is the height of ambition, and the climax of felicity. Just so was it with our dear friend Mrs. Dashaway.

That Mrs. Dashaway's arrival created what is usually called a "sensation," when she came amongst us, cannot be denied. She had been on a previous occasion to the spinster at the temple of Hope, to make an arrangement

with her for the future education of her daughter, who, it was agreed, should be placed as a parlour boarder in Miss Rosebelle's "select establishment." During this visit she had taken care to inform the schoolmistress who it was that did her the honour to be her guest. Poor Miss Rosebelle was absolutely electrified. She had never been in such company before. Mrs. Dashaway had astounded her. She had talked incessantly for five hours, and all about herself. She had "Burke's Peerage" at the end of her tongue, could tell the history, pedigree, marriages, and intermarriages of every noble family of the "United Kingdom." Nor was there one of them that she was not either related to, or in some measure connected with. Her influence was infinite. She could make anybody's fortune if she pleased. The Duke of —, Earl —, and Lord —, would be delighted to serve her. Her daughter was betrothed to a young scion of nobility, who had an earldom in perspective! And should Miss Rosebelle's plan of tuition prove advantageous to her daughter, what would she not do for her?

Mrs. Dashaway was certainly a pattern for her sex, gifted as they are in the exercise of that useful and powerful organ the tongue. What an everplaying fountain of speech was hers; untiring, unceasing, it was the nearest approach to perpetual motion ever witnessed. It is generally held to be a proof of ability to be able to expatiate luminously upon any given subject, but that is nothing to what Mrs. D—— could do. She, dear woman, could expatiate luminously, and for ever, upon nothing. Give her nothing, sheer nothing, and she would talk time out of existence; give her *her-self*, and she would go on through eternity. If anybody ever deserved notoriety, it was Mrs. D.; she had it too, and there is comfort in the reflection.

Poor Miss Rosebelle was well nigh frantic with joy. She went into “strong hysterics” when Mrs. D. took her departure. All that night she dreamed of having her house full of heiresses and young ladies of title; and when she met one of her pupils, a swarthy little Indian girl, one of those who are termed “ille-

gitimates," she called out to her loud enough to be heard by the whole "establishment," "Good morning, *Lady* Harriet; I hope your *ladyship* is perfectly well." The poor girl stared, and every one thought the governess was "cracked." The next movement was to hire a "fly," and go round to all she knew to proclaim her wonderful good fortune. How people stared! "Could not Miss R. persuade the worthy lady to reside in 'our town?'" This was a very natural question, and Miss R. said she would try. She did try, and succeeded. Well, how pleased we were, to be sure! We did nothing but talk of Mrs. Dashaway for weeks. A "nine days' wonder" was nothing to it. We almost doubted our real felicity; it seemed like a dream, that "our town," that had never had even a nobleman's dog in it before, should now have a resident within its walls who was related to every peer in the country. It was providential that we were not bereft of our senses. Truly we were in danger. How we burned with the fever of expectation! When would the happy day arrive that should bring to us

our ardently-desired Mrs. Dashaway? Was it possible that we should be positive neighbours of a lady of noble blood? Oh dear! how we prayed that Heaven might prevent any interruption of her intentions! And how we had our dining and drawing-rooms painted and papered, in the hope that she would honour us with a visit! If his Majesty himself had been coming at that time, he would have been a secondary personage to Mrs. Dashaway.

At length the auspicious morn arrived. The sun shone resplendently, and gilded all around. The "four wheels" and "two wheels," the "one horse" and the "pair-horse," the "pony" and the "donky," "private" and "hired," were all in requisition on that day. The "my spouse and I" of every family turned out to drive up the road a few miles, to meet her and conduct her into the town in procession. It was an awful sight! A "*terrible* pretty concern," as "old Lot," the poacher, said. Hearts palpitated, bells rang, carriages ran one against another, whips smacked, pannels crack-



ed, and poles were broken asunder; the "like was never known before," not even in "the memory of" that notorious person in all towns, "the oldest inhabitant." "Old Lot," who fills that office in our town, said, "he'd be — if ever *he* see'd anything like it; the world was turned topsy-turvy." The pole of the attorney's phaeton entered the back of the curate's "four-wheel," and did serious detriment to the person of the curate's stout lady. But she bore the disaster heroically; and, notwithstanding a very extensive abrasion, and the pain incidental to such a catastrophe, she went on, and did not have the fracture repaired till she had seen the "dear lady" safely deposited in the abode provided for her. But the curate's wife, nevertheless, did not fail to admonish the lawyer, during the remainder of the ride, for the liberties he had taken, and was thus enabled to get rid of much of the spleen engendered by the accident.

Precisely at one o'clock the man stationed on the top of the curate's house, in what he

called an "observatory," let fly a squib that he had mistaken for a rocket, to announce that the procession was in sight. It came down the gently-sloping road majestically, old Dr Slaimour at the head, supported by the Bishop of Burleigh and the little doctor, the first mounted on a tall bare-boned hack, the second riding the horse that alternately draws his "chay" and his cart, and the *little* doctor mounted on his own *little* pony. The trio might be compared to Death between a Gulliver and a Lilliputian. As they turned the abrupt angle near our head inn, they were suddenly brought to a stand by a cart filled with rich manure, which sent forth its delicious odours, that were wafted by a gentle breeze, right along the whole line of the processsion. Miss Rosebelle fainted—it was too much for her delicate nerves; but Mrs. Dashaway gallantly stood erect in her hired carriage, and bore the brunt of the perfumed gale without flinching. She was merely observed to turn aside now and then in apparent disgust. Many of the ladies were in the same state as poor

Miss Rosebelle, who fell upon and crushed the fancy bonnet of Mrs. Dashaway's daughter.

The procession at length moved on. Mrs. Dashaway stood up, as it moved slowly along the High Street, and exhibited her person to much advantage. She was greatly studious in dress on all occasions, and on the present it was not likely that she would be negligent. She was very fond of reading romances, and usually adapted her dress to that described as worn by her favourite heroine. It so happened that her then favourite was of Spanish birth, and that the author, when he conceived her, had decked her out in the Andalusian style; accordingly, Mrs. Dashaway was dressed in the Andalusian manner, or at least in something as closely resembling it as she could contrive. She wore a flowing white veil over her head, which was intended to represent the mantilla, the description of which and its graceful folds had enraptured her. Her dress was partly black, partly white—a white body and black petticoat; her gloves were yellow, and when she alighted it was discovered that her

stockings were pink and her shoes green. She bent her head very graciously to all and sundry as she passed up the High Street, and most people thought she looked very hot, because her face was so red; there was another reason for that, however—but let that pass. Some beer was given away to the populace, and some money to the ringers. Everybody was happy, because Mrs. Dashaway was come to live in our town; and Mrs. Dashaway was supremely happy, because she was the first person in it.

Up to the period of which we now write, the government of our town had been vested in the hands of a ministry of petticoats, of which the Bishop of Burleigh's lady was the premier, and the virgin of the temple of Hope the home-secretary. They set the fashions, adopted certain rules for the observances of society, and set down those who should or should not be admitted to our circles either from within or without. It must be owned that their notions were somewhat antiquated. Mrs. Dashaway voted them all Goths and Vandals, urged the necessity of a new order of things, and, in

fact, wished to create as sudden a change in the manners of the people as took place on the restoration of the Stuart King. However obsolete our people's notions might be, they were those to which they had been accustomed, and they could not part with them without some little struggle. Remonstrance was vain—worse than vain; Mrs. Dashaway swore they were all fools, and she would have things managed in her own way. What cared she for the Bishop of Burleigh's wife? A shop-woman, indeed!—pish! was such a creature fit to compete with her? Let her confine herself to her own situation. She might be very clever at measuring tape or selling pins, or in making milk-and-water for the schoolboys, but she could not know anything of genteel life, to which she, Mrs. D., had always been accustomed; and it was the height of presumption for her, indeed, to entertain any opinion in opposition to hers. She, Mrs. D., was a gentleman by birth, education, and sentiment, and she wondered that those who were so far beneath her should take so much upon them-

selves. Had the bishop's lady any connexion with nobility, she should like to know? if she had, then indeed it might be all very well.

• Nobody could give an affirmative to this, and Mrs. D. declared that, unless she could have her own way, out of the town she would go.

• This, of course, was not to be thought of. To part with the acquisition, to attain which had cost us so much anxiety, and a procession to boot, was not to be endured. To say truth, we would sooner have crucified the bishop's tall wife than have continued her in office at the cost of our dear Mrs. Dashaway. Mrs. Dashaway saw she was gaining some advantage, and she talked enough to make any one else hoarse for ever. There she did beat us gloriously, we could not get a word in sideways; and if it had only been on the score of preventing the inconvenience of utter deafness to ourselves ever afterwards, we must have given in, as we did. We resigned ourselves into her keeping, and made up our minds that we would be "genteel" in spite of ourselves and nature. •

We have often known politicians talking themselves into office. The arena of the House of Commons has been made the workshop of spouters for chancellorships, premierships, and other ships, and our town was in like manner made the forum in which, by her pulmonary strength, Mrs. Dashaway actually talked herself in less than a month into the head of the administration. Never was change effected so suddenly and so thoroughly before. All the existing institutions were destroyed, the old members turned out of office, the late premier, the *ci-devant* vender of tape, and lady of the bishop of Burleigh, was obliged to content herself with the colonies; the secretary for the home department, the spinster in the tabernacle of Hope, of whom honourable mention will be made, was put off with a place in the customs; the foreign secretary was put off to the board of trade; and the other members were fain to retreat to the "woods and forests," and foreign department. Then began the tug of war.

Mrs. Dashaway had fairly seated herself at the head of affairs, but there were symptoms

of dissensions in the cabinet. The customs talked of neglect of duties; the woods and forests said new brooms might sweep clean, but the present administration would not be ever-green. The foreign department hinted that all was not sound at home, and the home secretary said that somebody ought to be sent abroad. The colonies even threatened actual emigration. Now a common organ would have sunk under this accumulation of difficulties; not so was it with Mrs. Dashaway's tongue. She began such a torrent of eloquence in-doors and out, to the parliament and to the people, that both were finally glad to leave the helm in her hands, in consideration of the purchase of a respite to their ears.

There were other considerations, also, which induced the people to put up with her government. She had voted them all dead bores and Goths when she first came amongst them; showed them their deficiencies in certain fashionable requisites; and had, moreover, promised to reform them altogether, and to place them upon a respectable footing in the world of



fashion ; in short, to redeem them from the purgatory of plain manners, and to place them in the heaven of affectation, and imitation of their betters. Everybody was charmed at the idea of being made genteel, and shocked when they found that there was a likelihood, in consequence of "differences in the cabinet," that she might resign, leave the county in disgust, and abandon them to the fate in which they had lived happily, never suspecting they were deficient in anything of politeness and gentility, until Mrs. Dashaway came amongst them. Hence the people petitioned the Lords and Commons, setting forth the advantages to be derived from the premiership of our excellent lady-minister, and praying that the dissensions might be discontinued. And as the Lords and Commons fancied themselves in equal want of some of Mrs. Dashaway's polishing powder, it was resolved that she should hold office, and that she should receive their warmest support.

So far all was well. The colonies, and the prime minister, like the two devils of a celebrated author, shook hands and were sworn

enemies ever afterwards. But the opposition of the president of the board of trade, the wife of one of the twin shopkeepers before referred to, had been too great to be passed over so lightly. In vain the latter said there had been some mistake. "No," said the prime minister, "there was no mistake, there could be no mistake, there shall be no mistake," and out of office the president of the board of trade went.

Then affairs assumed a new aspect. Mrs. Dashaway was established in power, and received universal submission. She managed matters in a very stateswoman-like manner, and received the homage paid to her with more than aristocratic *hauteur*. All the bending and sycophantic were put in office, or placed upon the sinecure list, and all those who had been obnoxious, or lukewarm in their support, were struck off the civil list, and removed to the cool shades of oblivion and retirement.

And now began the visible effects of this revolution in the order of things. They were not slow in developing themselves. Hitherto

there had been something like unanimity amongst the inhabitants. In days gone by, the curate would go and take his glass with the tradesmen at the Crown, or King's Head, as it might be, and after spending the evening in good fellowship be led or carried home by some of his boon companions, whose sons he would well birch in the morning, in his capacity of schoolmaster, in return for their good offices. The doctors, too, would mix with their patients, without talking of the sacrifice of "professional dignity," and the lawyers were as often to be found discussing the merits of ale or brandy-and-water, surrounded by their clients of various classes. But now all was changed. Mrs. Dashaway taught them gentility, and classification. There are as many parties in society here in our town, where none could disgrace the other, as in the wide world beyond its petty limits.

Those who were taught gentility by Mrs. Dashaway, are always sneering at their "vulgar neighbours," as they call them, and the latter are always aping the gentility of the

former. The former think of the latter with contempt and disgust, the latter look up to the former with envy. One party is striving not to be thought vulgar, the other labouring to become genteel. One working might and main not to be taken for the other, and the other fagging for ever not to be taken for themselves. And, after all, the two parties *i. e.* the "great vulgar and the small," cannot with all their toil, and fatigue, and anxiety, discover the slightest reason for all this in birth or connexion. The one rose from a stock similar to the other—both fed from pork. But the retired tradesman is no longer a tradesman. He lifts his head, gives his sons and daughters a superficial education, and they sneer at their former companions because they are so illiterate; the latter, in turn, while they try to overleap the barrier thus placed between them, by becoming as superficial as those they envy, turn their affectedness of dress into ridicule, though if they could be admitted within the same pale, they would with pride and rapture adopt the same dress, with all its extravagances.

But we are losing sight of the author of the mischief. In justice to Mrs. Dashaway, it should be said that she managed the affairs of government in the most statesman—stateswoman-like manner. Indeed, she possessed all the leading attributes for a premier. She had promptitude, energy, decision, firmness, and intrepidity. It is true that her enemies gave different terms to these qualifications; but I am not one of that number, and shall not detract from her merits. Let other people say what they will, I am impartial, and will do her justice. She met the clamours of the opposition, out of doors and in-doors, with coolness and judgment; and she triumphed over the machinations of party, and the cabals of intrigue, for a very considerable period, and there is no doubt she would have done so till the present time, but—alas! these “buts.” Human affairs are subject to so many drawbacks! They seldom go on smoothly, because an “if” stands in the way; and if they do, the aspect of things is quickly changed by a “but.” But we must not anticipate.

There was one cause of opposition to the administration, which it must be admitted was a serious objection, and presented almost insuperable difficulties to the premier; in fact, to any but a Dashaway they would have been quite so. The "great captain" carried things with a tolerably high hand; but if he has any view to place and power, and any wish to keep them, let him take a lesson from Mrs. Dashaway. If he does this, the odds are, the great captain himself to the veriest Bobadil, that he retains office for ever—provided somebody gives him the elixir vitæ.

But to return to the cause of dissension in the little world of our town. Mrs. Dashaway was firmly resolved never to patronize pelisses. Nothing but shawls—"elegant shawls"—could meet with her august approbation; and these she intended should be worn in the "true Parisian style," as she wore her own, and as she would teach everybody else to wear them. Poor woman! she had never seen Paris in her life; but what of that? she said, and swore, she had; and we of our town were not able

to gainsay it. Like herself, we were innocent of a practical acquaintance with French customs, and therefore our good folks took it for granted that the slatternly air with which she wore, and the knowing impudent manner in which she threw on, her shawls, were the choicest essences of French elegance and manners.

Well, there was such work at the parties after this! Such discussion—such admiration—such vituperation—such throwing about of arms—such showing of shoulders and other things—such quarrelling, and such enmity, the like was never seen before. A revolution was confidently expected. People who had been sworn friends were now deadly foes. Young ladies who had opened their bosoms to each other in unreserved confidence, never to be broken, now spluttered forth every secret as fast as they could speak, and faster than anybody else could hear. Miss Ambrosiana Rosebelle had resolved upon supporting the ministry on this momentous question for two very important reasons. Miss Dashaway was

one of her pupils, and pelisses did not become her; she had given her vote, and she had worn her shawl, to put on (I beg pardon, "throw on" was the word,) to throw on which, she was practising three hours a day regularly, besides sundry odd snatches when she could, and of course excepting the public displays she made at every party. At one of the latter she had knocked out two of the few rickety teeth of poor old Doctor Slaimour in one of her evolutions; with the back of her long bony hand, and the elderly gentleman has mumbled ever since; and on another occasion, when "throwing on" her shawl, and at the same time throwing back her head to give the action due effect, she poked her clump of hair right into the mouth of the poor curate, who was unsuspectingly taking part in a glee. The poor man was ill for many weeks.

Now came the grand struggle; Miss Ambrosiana Rosebelle had mighty notions of gentility, and, as we have said, supported the ministry. She was long and thin—an empty thread-paper—grown somewhat on one side,



nearly all of "a hoo" as the sailors say; and she had a friend, of whom honourable mention has already been made—the bishop's lady, and the secretary for the colonies, who was tall enough for the right hand man of a grenadier's company, straight in her figure—very straight indeed, and angular. Now this lady had been persuaded, by herself or somebody else, that she had a fine figure; she thought length without breadth, depth, or substance, was symmetry. It was an original opinion, and we give her due credit for it.

To hide such a figure as this under a shawl, however elegant, was not to be endured or even thought of; there was a division in the cabinet. She of the colonies was determined to oust her of the board of trade, and *vice versa*. Well, there was great work. They had long been friends, each knew the secrets of the other, and out they all tumbled. What with the truth, and that which was not the truth,—dear, dear, what a budget they opened! However, the premier was inexorable on the score of shawls, she was crook-backed herself. I do not mean

that she had a hump, but she was round-shouldered, and all awry, and shawls must therefore be the order of the day.

The colonial secretary tried next to oust the premier ; she might as well have tried to move St. Paul's church. She was kicked out herself, and joined the opposition. She advocated the levelling system, and became the Hume of her party. Her speeches were as prosy, her calculations as just. She opposed every motion, and raised such cabals out-of-doors, as were never seen before. Still the administration was well seated. It was firm, and stood all the shocks of faction with as much composure as the rock of Gibraltar views the beating of the waves against its base. Mrs. Dashaway did not even talk more in consequence, for she must always talk her quantum about something or other, and it was no matter what. The division upon the shawl question was as good as anything else. Her private and confidential secretary, between whom and herself there was subsequently another division, declared that she took a little extra brandy while the agitation

continued, but that was all. Well, the shawls were now more the rage than ever. Such throwing on, such slipping them down till the centre reached far below the waist, while the ends were just hanging over the shoulders; such wafting of the breezes as the garments were tossed about in the "true Parisian style"—they blew out all the lights at church one Sunday night, excepting those round the pulpit, and left the poor little curate standing up in the dark church like a glow-worm in a coal-cellar. It was absolutely dangerous to go into any house while the rage for "throwing on" lasted. Your eyes and teeth were constantly in hazard, and if these escaped, a thousand to one you had the ear-ache or a stiff neck from the effects of the keen breezes produced by the waving and flapping of shawls. So things went on till the end of the Dashaway Administration, for it had an end after all, and thus it came to pass.

Poor dear Mrs. Dashaway had stood the brunt of opposition bravely, and it had not injured her; but—she had seen friends turn

•

faithless, and foes grow furious, and they had not displaced her ; but—she had been surrounded by agitators, reformers, levellers, destructives, and every species of obnoxious animal in the creation of policy, they could not remove her ; but—yes there was a “ but,” and though it grieves me, I must out with it. In short, her government would have continued, she would have been worshipped, honoured, adored on earth and sainted in heaven, but the treasury department failed her. In vulgar phrase she had no money, and even Mrs. Dashaway, who had done wonders, performed miracles indeed, could not manage the affairs of state, nor her own, without that indispensable article. The chancellor of the exchequer had been negligent. The expenditure had widely exceeded the revenue. Alas ! alas ! must I confess it ? I am sad at heart to do so, but the truth must be told, or our history is good for nothing.—There was no revenue at all.

The first intimation poor dear Mrs. Dashaway had of the disaffection that existed, was from

the solid, substantial, fat, and well-to-do "*head* butcher of our town. In short, he is a "troublesome customer," as the pugilists say, to everybody who is a customer of his. And, to say all the truth, he is worse to those who deal elsewhere. He has the most saucy look of any butcher I ever met with. Many people, when they go into a butcher's shop, take up the meat, handle it all ways, and find fault. "Too lean," or "too fat," and so on. Show me the man, woman, or child, that dare put a finger on his meat, or look into the joints or crevices, or find a fault. Let them whisper "too lean," if they dare. If of the male sex, a million to one he is in the gutter before he has taken his finger off the meat, or closed his lips. If a lady, the gentlest treatment she could expect would be to be pushed out of the shop.

Now the butcher is not a bad fellow notwithstanding his choleric temper—that is to say, he has his points. But he has some worldly notions, it must be owned. He will give, but,

like many others, he will give most where least is wanted. For instance, reader, if you, with that sweet smile and interesting countenance, should happen to take up your abode in our town, he would give you "a year's credit," from Christmas to Christmas. You would receive your bill about the end of January, and be expected to pay it the first of February, there, or thereabouts, which, of course, you would do, and enjoy the reputation of being a good customer, and the butcher, aristocrat as he is, would make you a most plebeian bow. But then the butcher would know that you had "means;" if there was any reason to suspect you had not, your smile and handsome face would do little; you would neither get beef nor bow, and before he would condescend to cut a joint he would "see the money."

When Mrs. Dashaway came first into our town, the butcher was in high glee. "Such a *nice* customer—quite a lady! no pride, not a bit—just the sort o' lady I likes!" These were his words, and he meant all he said. The truth was, Mrs. D. had the art of managing

people, and an intuitive knowledge of character. She saw at a glance the sort of man she had to deal with. If she had been high, the butcher would have been high too; if she had asked credit, it would have implied need of it, and need of all kinds was his abomination—he would not have sent her a sheep's head. Therefore Mrs. D. had him shown into her parlour, desired him to take a seat, ordered the servant to bring in wine and brandy, told the butcher to help himself, asked him if he could do her the favour to cash her a Bank of England note for two hundred pounds, told him not to apologise for not having sufficient cash at hand, gave her orders, desired him to send in his bill with the meat, condescended to inquire about "stock," admired his meat, and—the business was done.

The butcher was in raptures, the lady in credit. Whenever he called, she gave him as much as he chose to drink, and he went away happy. No bill was sent in for two years. When it was, it was—not paid. No matter, he never asked for it. He "did not want money,

not *he*, and Mrs. Dashaway was a *lady*. Time enough." So thought Mrs. D. The third Christmas came. No pay. The butcher was not down-hearted even then; but it so happened that about this time the wine-merchant stopped his supplies, and the next time the butcher called for orders—oh! dire mischance!—Mrs. D. could not ask him to drink. The butcher was offended. He made inquiries; he was outrageous—"have his money he would;" he threatened, he executed, and employed his solicitor. "Misfortunes never come single:" everybody got into the same humour when the butcher gave out, for he had been the chief cause of other people's forbearance; and Miss Rosebelle, who had a long bill against Mrs. D. for the education of her daughter, committed the outrageous sacrilege on her illustrious person of arresting her.

From this dilemma Mrs. D. escaped by a compromise, and she still continued to live in the town; but she was looked upon rather as that which *had been* than a thing that *was*. "The glory of her house had departed." She



had "fallen from her high estate," and great indeed was her fall. But she still retained her spirit, and looked saucily at all, and contemptuously at many. By most of her former associates in office she was "cut;" a "dead cut" too it was, and an unkind one. She had no credit, could give no parties, consequently was asked to none. Few people even condescended to "call" upon her; and if she "called" upon them, they were "not at home." She was fain to take up with her washerwoman, with whom she used to drink brandy, talk of former splendour, and gradually get into a state of temporary beatitude, in which she continued till she was conveyed to bed independent of all the world and insensible to its cares.

• She now became somewhat reckless. What she had previously accomplished by "management" and address, she now did by means that partook more of the nature of actual fraud. "She must live," she said, "and a *certain style* was what she had always been accustomed to, and what she always would maintain." Poor woman! she had not the slightest idea of re-

trenchment. Her son made her an allowance; her aunt paid her daughter's governess, and her son's education and board at our "head school." The money was remitted to *her* as the successive half-yearly bills became due, and—need we say more?

The butcher also was tricked again. She had credit to a certain extent allowed her by her son, who was responsible for the payment. This was not enough, for Mrs. Dashaway was a most charitable woman, fond of entertaining her "friends," the washerwoman and her relatives, whose parasitical and fawning behaviour was consolatory to her in her loss of caste. It must be understood that Mrs. D. gave much away, loved to be called "generous," and, so long as she could support this reputation, what mattered it at whose expense? That was a consideration that could only enter the mind of a vulgar person; "high-souled" beings like herself do not heed such paltry notions. Hence she annually distributed her "tickets for beef" at Christmas as usual, and weekly supplied the wants of her select companions. To accomplish

this, she showed a letter, purporting to come from her son, extending her credit. The butcher was fairly taken in. The son returned, would not pay the increased amount, and when he departed Mrs. D. was again in danger. She was compelled to leave her house. Two years' rent were unpaid, which she had punctually received from her relations; but she was permitted to remove her furniture. She took up her abode at a small road-side cottage about a mile from the town, and, like many disappointed people, grew furiously disgusted with the "vile world," abused everybody in it, and was loud in her condemnation of the ingratitude she had experienced. The following lines are a part of a doggrel version of her complaints, written by some *would-be* rhymers, of our town and privately shown amongst those who were once her "friends."

" A SCENE .

" From the last act of a serio-comic, mock-heroic, burlesque extravaganza, recently performed at ——"

VOL. I.

H

*“Principal Characters.*

“Mrs. Dashaway, a lady of universal charity and philanthropy, high honour and principle, and extensive aristocratic influence and connections (according to her own showing), with a pedigree of illustrious ancestors as long as her own tongue, by Mrs. —.

“N. B. This lady has deservedly attained considerable celebrity in various parts, by her performances. Her first appearance was in the East Indies, where she astonished the natives by her brilliant display of talents. She afterwards appeared in London, and other places with equal success, having invariably drawn down the reiterated shouts of her electrified audiences.

“Paddy O’Shaughnessey, an Emerald Islander, with a little brogue but no blarney, without pretensions to gallantry or chivalry, to whom Mrs. Dashaway in vain appeals to rescue her from her perilous situation, by a gentleman, his first appearance on the stage.”

## " SCENE.

" A small anti-chamber in a cottage. At one end of the room a sofa, at the other a table, on which lie sundry books, an empty brandy bottle, and two glasses. The coldness of the season made feelingly perceptible by the absence of a fire, and darkness just rendered visible by a small taper, ycleped a rushlight. Enter the Hibernian, ushered in by an old domestic; then Mrs. Dashaway from an opposite door, with a majestic sweep — the lustre of her eyes dimmed by tears or brandy.

*Mrs. Dashaway.*

Ah! my firmest of friends, pray how do you do?

*O'Shaugnessey.*

Why, faith, pretty well, ma'am — and how then are you?

*Mrs. Dashaway.*

Indeed, my dear Sir, I am harass'd to death ;  
My impudent duns here will scarce give me breath.  
Believe me, my friend, that an hour hardly passes  
But here am I pester'd with these cursed asses,  
Who blind to their own future interests are,  
And 'gainst me they threaten to wage a hot war.

Nought else less than bailiffs and writs do they threaten,  
And think by their lawyers that I shall be beaten  
Into submission, but they 'll find to their cost,  
My courage and famed strength of mind won't be lost.  
No, rather than one of the tribe should me master,  
I'll fearless go henceforth, and brave each disaster.  
O'Shaugnessey, think — the annoyance how great,  
My butcher refuses to serve me with meat,  
And he's not the only one — all are the same,  
Now can't you see clearly how much they're to blame?

“ Mr. O'Shaugnessey does not appear. to be particularly clear-sighted at the moment, but the lady proceeds—

I came back to this dirty, rascally place,  
Preferring to meet the whole host face to face,  
Than have it once thought for a moment that I  
From debts and my creditors ever would fly.  
Now don't you perceive that it's quite manifest  
Such actions my honour and truth well attest?

“ O'Shaugnessey shakes his caput aside.  
Mrs. Dashaway goes on—

Shall it ever be said, that a woman like me,  
From honour, and all that is just, could once flee?  
No, the blood in these veins is noble and pure,  
To be thus suspected I cannot endure.

“ Here the lady's lachrymal sluices open

*secundum artem*, and her soiled kerchief is for sometime ineffectually employed in stemming the torrent. At length the deluge subsides, and she resumes with energy—

The truth, dearest Sir, is just this, and no more,  
From this place they mean to expel all the poor.  
No matter how highly illustrious their birth ;  
No matter how great or well-known is their worth ;  
The gentlefolks poor will be fairly turn'd out,—  
For this, and this only, is made all the rout :  
And this town, in which such improvements I've made,  
Will be left to the vulgar dabblers in trade.  
Such wretches ungrateful I ne'er saw before,  
Not one but I've honour'd, and served o'er and o'er.  
I my patronage gave to both great and small,  
I have feasted, and banqueted, yes, one and all.

First, there's the doctor, that people call "Slay-more,"  
Whom the —— shall have me if ever I pay more ;  
Him how I have fed, and received at my table !  
Where he ate, ay and drank too, while he was able,  
Till, dreading the end of his own gormandising,  
He was fain to take pills ere he dared to be rising.  
Now I'm going down-hill, and given the last are  
Of feastings, he kicks me to send me the faster.

And then there's the parson—now isn't it hard  
That he, like the rest, should his best friend discard ?  
Only think of the pains that with him I've taken  
To make him genteel, and now I'm forsaken !  
Without me in the church he never could stir, man,  
I taught him the method of writing a sermon,

Gave him a library—good manners. I taught him,  
The first gown he wore I vow that I bought him ;  
I taught him to walk and to hold up his head,  
To speak without spluttering whenever he read.  
'Twas I introduced him to all good society,  
I praised up his learning — I praised up his piety,  
I praised him for being so constant a kneeler,  
'Twas thus that I lauded him to my aunt Breelor.  
I brought him of pupils at least nearly fifty,  
And, would you believe it ? he's now grown so thrifty  
That, when I just ask'd him to lend me a trifle,  
He had the hard heart to my hopes coldly stifle.

Again, there's the virgin that lives in the lane,  
How much I have given to her is quite plain ;  
Pounds upon pounds I have put in her pocket,  
I gave her a lock of my hair in a locket,  
Brought all the connexion she has now, unto her ;—  
The same thing I did for her brother, the brewer.  
In the ranks of my best friends I did enlist her,  
She swore that she loved me the same as her sister.  
Well ! what was the end on't ? — contempt and derision ;  
I owed her a bill, and she sent me to prison.

And see, there's the lawyer assuming such airs,  
Whenever I meet him, quite rudely he stares ;  
Now isn't it too bad ? — indeed it's quite horrid,  
I scarcely can speak for my spirits are flurried.

“ Here the lady's voice falters, and she appears about to faint. O'Shaugnessey looks alarmed, but as he does not offer any support she quickly recovers, and continues.



It was not so once — he then could be pliant,  
When my interest brought him full many a client ;  
When I gave him good wines and excellent dinners,  
And feasted the whole of the sweet tribe of sinners.  
But times are now alter'd, he sees well as I do,  
And I'm left in the lurch just like the queen Dido.  
Thus you see, my dear Sir, how badly I'm treated,  
Oh dear ! I beg pardon, why don't you be seated ?  
I'm sorry I did not think of it before ;  
My griefs are so great, I can think of no more.  
Those demons have blighted my soul—they've belied me.  
I'll sit on this sofa, and you sit beside me.  
It's too bad with all my sad sorrows to plague you,  
This nasty cold cottage has given me the ague.  
I've a favour to ask you — I know you will grant it,  
Oh dear ! it's so cold I could creep in a blanket.  
You see, my dear Sir, but one chance have I left,  
That's to fly, or to be of sweet freedom bereft.  
And as my harsh duns do all still refuse mercy,  
The best I can do is to set off to Jersey.  
To that place, or elsewhere, to go I'll not fail,  
'Twere better you know to go there than to jail.  
Then let it be thus, as the time's fast arriving,  
You bring here a gig (are you clever at driving ?)  
On next Sunday night at the lone midnight hour,  
And take me far hence from the dread sheriff's power.

“ The bashful frontispiece of O'Shaugnessey  
is here seen to turn deadly pale, and cold drops  
of perspiration stand on his forehead, as if such  
matters of moment were too much for his natu-

ral timidity. He looks alternately at his hat and the door, as if imploring the one to jump on his head, and the other to open that he may rush through it. Mrs. Dashaway looks surprised, and anxiously enquires—

But why do you shrink, man? Come do not dissemble. You look pale. Are you ill? Good L—d! how you tremble. Methinks in my cause you are wondrous cool, I'm sorry I ask 'd you—(*aside*) the fellow's a fool.

“O'Shaugnessey, with his hair on end, by a crab-like movement sidles towards the door.

What! then you are off, Sir? I've been much to blame, I wish you good night, Sir—

*O'Shaugnessey.*

I wish you the same. *Exit.*

(The curtain falls, leaving Mrs. Dashaway motionless with rage.)”

The eccentricities of originals are seldom annoying, but the affectation of their awkward imitators are insufferable. The gloom of Byron, his disregard of conventional forms, and his contempt of the world, gave offence to few; but a host arose to ape him that disgusted all. Men-milliners thought proper to

become misanthropes, and to discard the world. Raw, unfledged bardlings attempted the soaring flights of his lofty genius, namby-pambied their maudlin sentiment, took to wearing open collars and black ribbons, and ate fish every day. Disappointed boobies who fancied they had "loved too well," because they had made fools of themselves and were derided, wrote "farewells," and protested womankind perfidious. Weak heads that had run with open mouths into what they termed friendship and confidence, and were exposed and laughed at for their pains, abused everybody, reviled their existence, and cursed their fate. Such as these, and "such things are," quickly sprang up, and for a while astonished their admiring acquaintance, but even the most partial soon discovered they were not Byrons. It was not so easy to convince the asses themselves of the length of their ears, and the only remedy left was, to get rid of them in any way ; they were sent to Coventry accordingly. Some happily reformed, and have made very tolerable barbers ; but the majority of them ended their

career in certain asylums providentially prepared for the reception of lunatics.

“Are the eccentricities of genius to be blamed for thus indirectly giving birth to these swarms of imitators? That is rather a misfortune than a fault. They are imitated only in their errors—their merits are not comeatable by those who would imitate at all. The faults of genius are tolerated because they are accompanied by so much that is excellent, and sublime; but in those who ape their peculiarities we behold nothing but vices. Thus it was with poor dear Mrs. Dashaway. We overlooked her extravagances because we knew there was a stamp about her. She had tact, and there was a certain something in the wildest of her vagaries that shewed originality. Mrs. Dashaway would have scorned to borrow from anybody—let us not be misunderstood—we mean in *idea*. In *reality* she was as liable as any one we know. Her notions were quite free from any narrow-minded bias respecting the *meum* and *tuum* of this life. She looked upon every one’s purse as “trash,” to which she had as

much right as the owner. "'Twas her's, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands," and why not to her again? Still she would have blushed at the thought of being indebted to mortal man, or woman either, for any scheme that she acted upon as her own.

Nobody could deny that she had merit, if it were only on the score of setting up a school of gentility, herself knowing nothing about it, and her pupils being utterly incapable of having aught like it beaten into them. If this was not a soaring flight, tell me what is? We need not wonder at her fall. Again, to set up an establishment in our town, giving entertainments, the very wine of one of them actually consuming more than her entire yearly income, patronising everybody, feeding many, and bribing all; assuming the sole direction and government of our town in that most difficult and capricious of all political institutions—fashion; controlling our very manners, eradicating our tastes, and altering our habits, literally making the old young, the young the rulers of the old, and herself the tyrant of

both — if to do all this upon *nothing* was not another soaring flight, in the name of scheming, what is? The wonder is that the wax of her wings was not melted ere it was. Some may say that nothing is more common than for people to live dashingly at the expense of their tradesmen. Tut! they know nothing about it. Show me the person that will go into an inland market-town, like ours, making it their permanent residence, and carry on this system as Mrs. Dashaway did. It may be very easy for people to victimize *once*, to go the round of a neighbourhood, and then start off to another, where they are not known; but to do the thing permanently, in a place where every motion is watched, every action pried into, talked of, exaggerated, and retailed; where every person considers everybody's affairs but his own legitimate subjects of attention and curiosity, is quite a different matter.

When Mrs. Dashaway was sent to Coventry things took a very material turn. The people had been ruled with a strong hand so long that they were tired of being ruled. They refused

to appoint a successor. Many pretenders started, but it would not do. There has not, I grieve to say it, been any regular government since the fall of the Dashaway administration. Matters are ordered now the "Lord knows how," and by whom. Everybody is a teacher of gentility, every family has its own school, and the systems are exactly as numerous. The wife of our *head* schoolmaster, the *ci-devant* vendress of tape, imagines that gentility lies in holding her head as high as possible, in treating all beneath her (and she thinks every one is beneath her) with arrogant *hauteur*, in ruling her husband, driving a huge, clumsy horse of the cart breed at the rate of five miles an hour, decking her tall person in gaudy silks, and crying up her husband as a genius because he has taken a degree at some college, and has written a volume of "sermons to little boys."

The impudent-looking fat wife of our musical little curate conceives the essence of gentility to be in making her daughters believe themselves angels, and to "teach the young

idea how to shoot" at noblemen, or at least men of large property : to be in her own person blustering and rude, to cut up her neighbours, decry everybody's children but her own and to drive a pony "under twelve hands high" in a four-wheeled chaise, having wheels "not exceeding eighteen inches," neither paying duty, conceiving, no doubt, that to kings and husbands duty should not be paid.

Our *head* lawyer, I beg his pardon, solicitor, whose wife is a good-natured, passive sort of creature, believes it genteel to keep a couple of cobs, value sixteen pounds each, and to call them "*My* carriage-horses;" he has also lately bought a second-hand phaeton, which he as good-naturedly calls "*My* carriage"—a farmer's manure waggon might be so termed with as much reason, both go on four wheels. He likewise considers it an essential mark of good-breeding that his daughter, who would be very well if let alone, should be crammed with accomplishments to repletion; paying her "masters" half-price, and recommending them to other families, who shall pay for both : that he should



tax his tradesmen's bills till their profits are scarcely equal to the value of the paper they are written upon ; and that he should talk graciously, smoothly, in a full mellifluous tone, at each sentence waving his long head backwards and forwards like the head of the mandarin images we sometimes see on chimney-pieces.

The truth is, that we are all going to " sixes and sevens " since Mrs. Dashaway departed. She left us one night, nobody knew how, and where she went nobody could guess. Our pleasure was as great when we got rid of her, as it was when we welcomed her with bells and bonfires. Such is human nature !

## THE CURATE.

“Insanis, Paule; multæ te litteræ ad insaniam convertunt.”

THE large house which crosses the upper end of the High Street, and stands facing the “Market-house,” is the habitation of the Curate, who, whatever may be said of the “over-paid clergy” in general, has not yet been greatly benefited by the “loaves and fishes.” He has been nineteen years curate, at ninety pounds a-year, and during the whole of that time, I verily believe, he has not put nineteen-pence of it in his own pocket, that is, for his own “private use and emolument.” A rare instance, it must be confessed, but he is a *rara avis* altogether.

He is a short, spare, dark-haired, down-look-

ing, plain, unostentatious sort of man. To look at his head, you would think there was little in it, and to judge of his unaffected, modest, and hesitating manners, you would be confirmed in your opinion. But, like most opinions formed upon first impressions, it would be erroneous. He wants to be "drawn out." In truth, he is a singular instance of acquirement. Original genius, perhaps, he may not have, but his learning is profound. He is a walking universal dictionary of living and dead languages. He gloats at a polyglott Bible as the rector would leer at a tithe-pig. He regards any man who does not the same as nature, is said to regard a vacuum. He seems only to be able to draw his breath with ease in a learned atmosphere. What the open common, emerald fields, and towering hills are to Miss Mitford, the dusty library is to him. He never "sweats in the eye of Phœbus," exercise seems beyond his thoughts, as much as labour would be beyond his power. Such a man for quotations, or for a Greek ode! He would argue for a week about a particle.

The good people here regard their curate as the greatest prodigy that ever illumined the earth. Nobody ever presumes to argue with him; they listen and take it upon trust, the rather because they do not understand a sentence he utters. His sermons are dissertations upon the dead languages. He will give the assembled ignorant a treatise upon Hebrew, and prove to the rustics who cannot read English the true derivation of a word from the Greek. There may be some few touches of morality in his lectures, but they are "like angels' visits, few and far between." I hate hacknied quotations.

His acquirements are not confined to antique lore. He has dipped into modern science. He has cultivated music theoretically, practically, and fundamentally. He has built an organ, and plays upon it. To him is the good town indebted for the training of its choristers. He has, with the assistance of the blacksmith, the Orpheus of this part, trained up a select band for this department of the church, and still continues to have them *twice* a week at his own house, to practise!! If this does not evince a

love of harmony, and zeal in the service of the church, what can? His very amusements are scientific. His toys are an achromatic telescope seven feet long in the barrel, an air-pump, and sundry other instruments, of a similar description.

Not contented with having instructed the choristers, he wishes to cultivate the musical talents of his friends, and talks of raising a "glee club." Next to languages, music is his darling hobby. If any man does not think with him on both subjects, he looks at him with pious horror. Now, of all men on earth, defend me from amateur musicians. I had rather embrace a man who had the plague, than sit an hour under the infliction of their crotchets and semitones, their general criticisms, and rapturous unmeaning exclamations.

The curate once asked me to become a member of the society. I pleaded want of voice—he was complimentary. I pleaded want of musical knowledge, I pleaded every thing but want of taste, and at last, as a *dernier ressort*, pleaded that. I shall never forget his shudder. He looked like a man under the influence of ipeca-

cuanha. He was sick at heart. Poor man ! he had no idea that a being existed who had not a soul for "sol, fa," and "fal, la." From that moment I have no doubt he looked upon me as far gone in paganism.

However, he is not without much of good-nature and philosophical forbearance towards the faults of humanity, which caused his disgust and horror to subside into a sort of pity. It was curious to see the condescension with which he treated me. Truly his commiseration was great. I do not think he ever fancied, after my unfortunate declaration, that I could have any chance of being saved. I was condemned because I could not sing. He would have made me sing, and thus saved me, in the goodness of his heart, but I was obstinate and clung to my error. I was a "lost sheep," and blindly strayed, though I might have been carefully folded. Of course, I was not unconscious of his merits, nor of my own comparative insignificance. I could not sing "Mynheer Vandunck," nor find "Latin for a tea-chest." He could have translated the whole

glee tea-chest and all, into twenty tongues, and sung them afterwards. I was the minnow, and looked up to him, the triton, with reverence, as I hope I ever shall do.

It has been said, more than once, that he who has passed through all the forms of a regular classical education, and has not been made a fool in his progress, has reason to congratulate himself upon a very narrow escape. However narrow our worthy curate's escape might have been, he certainly was not made quite a fool. It is indeed singular, with all the time passed in the maintenance of his old acquirements, and in the cultivation of new ones, how he ever finds leisure for so much gossiping, such assiduous attention to his duties, and so much prudent regard to worldly matters, added to which, so much fiddle-faddle in the shape of gardening, improvements in bricks and mortar, and a certain correspondence in the "Gentleman's Magazine." In the matter of gossip, he is equal to nine-tenths of the old women in the parish, and they comprise a numerous class of both sexes. In the

exercise of his clerical duties no man is more exemplary. Whether in the church or at the bed-side of the sick, nothing is neglected. He is charitable too, and gives much to those who need it. He would give more, but for the influence of gynecocrasy.

In early life he married a lady whom everybody pronounces to have been one of the best of her sex, and therefore I hold it an indisputable fact that she was so. She died, and, in order to retrieve his loss, he promoted his daughter's governess to the rank of his lady, and is governed accordingly. Women, as the Scotch say, are "kittle cattle." Like fire, they are very well when kept under, but oh! what masters they make! The poor curate "altered his state," with a vengeance. At the period of his second commission of matrimony, he kept a large school, and "reared the tender thought" with energy and success. This was soon upset. The *ci-devant* governess could not brook the idea of being the wife of a schoolmaster!

His eldest, and, I believe, his then only



daughter, of course resided at home. She was, it is said, a lovely and amiable girl, at that interesting age when female loveliness is heightened by the purest innocence, mixed with the innate dignity of conscious virtue, and the rich beamings of intellectuality bursting through the mental veil of childhood. She inherited all her mother's mildness of disposition, sincerity of heart, and warmth of affection. She had mourned over the loss of her beloved parent long and deeply, and her bereavement had caused her that corroding sorrow which preys so cruelly upon health. Her constitution had ever been delicate, and her frame slight and fragile. She might be likened to a budding rose, which, if sheltered, and fostered with tender care, gave promise of expanding into perfect beauty, but which, if subjected to the world's chill storms, would shrink and fall to the earth.

This had long been obvious to her deceased parent. Maternal solicitude had watched with untiring eye her gradual progress from infancy upwards, and amidst all that amiable pride

which a mother's fond breast nourishes for her loved offspring—amidst all the rich reward of her cares which the genuine goodness and affection of that dear child had given her, there was still a secret heartfelt foreboding, which caused her days of anxiety and nights of sleeplessness. The delicate person and transparent complexion seemed to whisper to the observant mother that her life would be brief; and the keen sensitiveness of mind, and quickness of feeling, with which nature had endowed her, told but too plainly that she was ill adapted to contend with the trials which this life has for all. Thus impressed, the doating parent's happiness was alloyed, as indeed what happiness is not? and for the last two years of her own life she experienced much disquietude. But she was not without hope. She knew the general kindness of her husband's disposition, and she knew his strong love for the object of her dearest thoughts; and her own pious confidence in the protection of Heaven led her to believe that its protection would be extended to one, who, it was not presumptuous to think, was eminently deserving.

The last sad scene at length came. Death, whose progress had been slow, but not invisible, somewhat abruptly closed the strife. It is too frequent that when those we know, and love, have been long inured to illness, we look not so immediately for their final departure, as we perhaps should. We are lulled into a fatal security by being accustomed to behold the sufferer in sickness, and each fluctuation for the better is hailed as an omen of joy, and a reason for forming expectations consonant with our wishes. The changes for the worse we are apt to pass over, for the beamings of hope are never extinct in the human breast while life glimmers, however faintly. Neither is it unfrequent that the sufferers are themselves deluded. The firm and cheerful breast which has cherished piety, and loved "the ways of the righteous," sees not death in every pang, and dreads not the grave from every alternation of health. The weak and sinful are more likely to contemplate, and expect the demand of nature, because they fear to pay it. Leaving this, however, to be determined by others,

we will merely observe that the demise of this excellent lady was not looked for until within a very short period of its occurrence. Then, indeed, was the house a house of mourning, for grief is always more intense in proportion to its suddenness.

The last moments of the dying parent were now at hand, and all her anxieties for her child were redoubled. The heart-stricken girl stood sobbing inwardly at her bedside, one hand clasped by her mother's feeble fingers already moistened by the chill dew of death. The sincerely grieved husband stood on the other side. It seemed that something lay heavily upon the mind of the dying one, but that her energies were too far weakened to permit its utterance. Meantime, the ruthless strides of death came on more rapidly, and as a last effort of expiring nature, she arose to a sitting posture, in which she was supported by the united aid of her husband and daughter. As if conscious that her last breath was upon her lips, she made a final attempt to speak.

“ My life is now all but ended, my dearest

husband," she said. "You have rendered it one of comfort and joy; and oh! for the love of Heaven, let its last moments be as blissful as those which have passed. Nay, I doubt you not, but if you interrupt me, my last — my dearest purpose will not be fulfilled. Listen then to me. My requests, I have reason to hope, have never been unreasonable, for you have always cheerfully granted them, and have expressed pleasure in compliance. At this solemn hour I shall scarcely ask that which a husband ought not to give. But I have a promise to exact, without which my soul will leave my breast in agony, worse, oh! far worse than death. You see our beloved child. You know the delicacy of her constitution, and of her feelings. I ask you not to remain a widower. If your happiness can be increased by marriage, may it be so, and may she, upon whom you fix your choice be to you as I have been. To my child, she can never be that which I would have been if permitted. But oh! promise me, that whatever change may occur, your child and mine, the pledge and

the reward of our loves, shall never lose the advantage of your own personal care and tenderness ; that she shall not be driven from the home of her infancy to be consigned to strangers. Will you freely and unreservedly promise me this?"

"Sacredly and without reserve, I promise it," said the affected minister, in a voice tremulous with emotion.

"Blessings on you, my husband! and on you my——" The last word could not be heard. It died upon her lips as her soul fled from its earthly dwelling-place.

Months rolled on and seasons alternated, but the sorrow of that beauteous girl ceased not nor changed. Her slender figure became yet more slender, and her cheek more pale and transparent. Her eye, save when dimmed by tears, was yet brighter; but it was not the brightness of bodily health or of mental vigour—it was unearthly, and at times evanescent. The fondness and care of her parent were increased, and she gratefully and affectionately endeavoured to listen to his exhortations not to

abandon herself to futile grief. Long indeed was the attempt vain; but it did meet with some success finally, and there was hope that her health would return with all the strength it had ever possessed, and the expectation filled her father's heart with joy.

The present lady of our curate was, as we have already intimated, the domestic governess of this sweet charge. She had been engaged soon after the decease of his late wife, not with an instant view to the progress of his daughter's education, but for the sake of companionship and the dissipation of her sorrow. The treacherous assiduity and careful—nay, affectionate solicitude of this woman were all that could be wished, and more than the most sanguine could have expected. The parent was surprised and gratified; and it will be sufficient here to state, that, deeming her the most eligible person he could select for the future care of his child and household, he married her—without passion, doubtlessly, but from prudential motives.

Mistaken indeed was the hope he had formed. No sooner was she elevated to her present

situation, than all her kindness and affection were changed for bitter and unrelenting austerity. She insisted that the mild and drooping child should be sent to a boarding-school. The father remonstrated. She insisted more warmly; but, finding that this failed, had recourse to cruelty and persecution, which she directed towards the innocent object of her hatred. This succeeded. The parent saw that his daughter's health was daily—hourly growing worse, and he conceived it more to her advantage that another home should be provided for her.

The fatal blow was struck. With her dying mother's last request and her father's solemn promise still vividly fresh in her memory, the broken-hearted girl departed from that home which, during her deceased parent's life, had been so blessed and happy, for the house of a cold, calculating schoolmistress, to whom she could only be an object of profit. Her spirit sank, and quickly sought refuge in a realm where the arrogance and barbarity of a step-mother could not reach her. Even when she was dying she



was not permitted to return home, and while the weak husband used remonstrance, life fled. His heart, seared by the torturing remembrance of his broken pledge to his revered wife, is withered. His complaints, it is true, are withheld. But those who know him best say that, notwithstanding his ordinary cheerfulness, he often gives evidence of a mind scathed, and a bosom cankered.

The author of this desolation and wretchedness triumphs in her success, and rules with an iron hand all who are connected with her, but her own children.

## THE BISHOP OF BURLEIGH.

Between you and me, Doctor, a wife's the devil.

*Heir at Law.*

THE gentleman to whom this title is given was so denominated by a retired officer of the navy, "the chemist of our town," who is unfortunately more remarkable for ill-nature than for any other quality, excepting assurance. The reason of this burlesque title was simply this. The gentleman who received it is the master of our head school, and was somewhat proud of being appointed to the *curacy* of Burleigh, at a stipend of thirty-five pounds per annum, and so uplifted above his former self that he forgot his old associates, of whom the naval man was one. This neglect excited the indignation of the latter; he christened his *ci-devant* friend the *Bishop* of Burleigh, and as one appellation is as good as another for our purpose, we have retained it.

We will take a short walk down that narrow dirty lane towards the Bishop's house, and ten to one we see something of him. It is about the time for his daily drive, or ride, and perhaps we may see his wife, too.

Yes, "the schoolmaster is abroad" — there he goes, driving a heavy animal, that looks as if he had just escaped from a dung-cart, which he good-naturedly calls his chaise-horse. The worthy gentleman keeps but one. A horse of all work. No sinecure has he. Not even the sabbath is to him a day of rest. He draws his master and mistress, or carries the former, to church on Sundays; he carries his master out for exercise, and his mistress may be seen "flanking" him with a whip like a London hackney coachman's in her various junketings, on week days. All this is regular work to him in fine weather, and on wet, dirty, miserable days, when everybody else is in enjoyment within doors, this poor beast is carting his own hay and straw, and dragging manure for the garden and paddock. Any other horse but himself would be worn to a skeleton by such

constant labour, but he is of that class of animals which always look fat, chiefly from the original rotundity of form given them by nature. There is not an angle about him, the very tips of his ears are round.

There is the schoolmaster's wife, too, seated by his side in that clumsy-looking gig, with all the majesty of Cleopatra sailing down the Cydnus. She is only five feet eleven inches and a quarter in height, and, as you may see, towers far above her lord. Her shoulders are sharp, her waist is strait, her figure is flat, and her legs thick — at least at the ankles.

Her face would be tolerable, but for its expression of pride and ill-humour. Her dress of pea-green silk does not exactly suit her gaunt figure; her straw hat, high enough in itself, has its altitude increased by something intended to be an ornament, and to represent flowers. The manner in which she points with her parasol at every object to which she calls her husband's attention is — her own. She is striking in her appearance, it must be confessed, but there is something very "Noli me

tangere" in her looks, any one of which would turn the sweetest of Seville oranges into a lemon.

But it is a half-holiday and they are off, for a drive of pleasure to the lady — of hard work to the horse, and harder work to the driver. If he ceases to flog for a moment, his horse will be nibbling the nettles on the road side.

Very few men hide their talents in a napkin, and they are not schoolmasters. The latter never puts his candle under a bushel. He must exhibit his abilities. Either from natural vanity, or because people are easily caught by an ostentatious display of learning — either because it pleases his own littleness, or that it fills his benches and pockets, the schoolmaster must obtrude his talent even at the expense of another. Every schoolmaster is the first in his line. His system is the best, his mode of instruction the easiest. He not only pours instruction o'er the infant mind in a flowing tide, but he lays the base of future fame and greatness. If any one of his *scholars* prove apt and clever, he prophesies ulterior eminence, and takes all the credit to himself.

He does not allow even nature her due; no matter what germs *she* may have placed in his pupils, the honour is his own exclusively. As the old woman said, when she learned that the late Lord Nelson was made a peer and an admiral, "Ah! I always thought he'd come to that: I taught him his A, B, C;" so does the schoolmaster, when he hears of his pupil's success, rear himself to his full altitude, and say—"He was one of *my* scholars!"

Lord Brougham has swept a little of the dust off this species of late, but they require constant brushing. The influence of the chancellor, great though it be, does not extend much beyond the "bills of mortality." The majority of schoolmasters are yet pretty much of the old leaven. They teach that two and two are four; they make the parents understand that reading and writing are very necessary; and they show the pupils the difference between a verb and a proverb. If they can conjugate the one, and comprehend the other, when they have "completed their education," it is much, and they ought to be grateful.

The number of the scholars is the criterion of the master's capabilities. Coercion is deemed tuition; a sprinkling of everything, a knowledge of all. The mind receives no impression — the back receives much. The system of education is loose; its ramifications are disjointed and unconnected with each other. Where one boy has a chance of becoming a cultivated member of society, twenty are made absolute dunderheads.

Of schools, such as they are, we have enough, and to spare, in "our town." First on the list is the "*head-school*," at the head of which is the aforesaid Bishop of Burleigh. When this dignitary first entered our narrow precincts, it was as the usher to the establishment kept by our worthy curate. As we have seen, the lady in whom is comprehended "the powers that be" in the worldly concerns of the clergyman, compelled the latter to resign, which he did in favour of the bishop. At that period he was a modest, unassuming young man, and probably would have been so still but for causes which shall be explained.

*Imprimis*, he took unto himself a wife. He married a *ci-devant* vendress of tape, pins, and other commodities of a like nature. This lady, who was shopwoman in one of the receptacles for drapery and haberdashery with which "our town" is provided, was promoted by the bishop to the situation of mistress of his establishment. The intention was no doubt prudent, but it was not exactly realized. The bishop saw that the "little boys" wanted some clean, active body to look after them and their clothes, and wash them well every Saturday night, and doubtless conceived that for this purpose the shopwoman would do as well as anybody else. And so she might have done, if she pleased—but that is another thing.

The lady had no sooner set foot upon the threshold of her lord than she set her foot upon his neck, and she has kept it there ever since. She set up for a lady, did away with all the old customs of the house, and left the little boys to the care of themselves. Her husband, good man, was astounded. He and his predecessors had been accustomed to dine with the little



boys at one o'clock in the school-room. No such thing now. Mrs. — did not like "little boys;" they were "nasty little things." She hated them, and early dinners into the bargain. They had a separate table at a later hour, and the "nasty little things" dined by themselves.

The revolution thus commenced was by no means ended. Her husband was too humble, too civil by half to people—he must carry things off with an air. She could not suffer a husband of hers to be civil to anybody, unless they were rich. Moreover, she did not think that keeping a school was sufficiently respectable in itself. He must go to college, keep his terms, and get a degree. How much better it would look on his circulars to have printed "Boarding-school conducted by the Rev. Dr. —!" and a doctor she was determined to make of him, whether or not. The poor man had been a teacher so long, that he did not see the necessity of being taught himself. He did not like to go to school again. That was nothing; will he, nill he, go he must. And while his "little boys" were enjoying themselves in

the holidays, and his wife was "dragging her slow length along" at a watering-place, he was "keeping his term." In time he got his degree, and wrote the "Rev. —, B. A.;" but that was not "Doctor." His wife was impatient. As he intended to become, or, what was equal to it, as she intended to make him become a doctor, why not anticipate the event, and write "doctor" at once? Luckily some friends interfered, and prevented this piece of absurdity—the bishop did not "*write himself down an ass.*"

Matrimony is a state into which no man can enter without being changed for the better or worse. He cannot remain as he was. Wedlock may be compared to a dye-house, whoever goes in becomes tinged. So the bishop found it, and his case is not an isolated one. From being a civil and obliging youth, happy and contented in the state to which he had been called, he became arrogant—at least to his inferiors—restless, and ambitious. He had commenced his career in the same spirit which actuated his predecessors, and went on to instruct the dirty-faced tribe of urchins belonging to

the tradesmen of "our town," who were admitted as day-scholars, and joined in the classes with his boarders. He never perceived that his dignity was lessened by this piece of condescension till he had a wife; but "two heads are better than one," as the adage goes, and herein it was illustrated.

The bishop's lady saw with concern that by the admission of these nastiest of the "nasty little things" the high character of her lord and his "establishment" must inevitably suffer, and resolved that such things should be no longer permitted. The tradesmen's sons must be exterminated from the school. She had herself cut, with her own fair hands, the diaper, &c. in which the "nasty little things" were enveloped when they came into life, and had received the hard cash which their mothers, honest women, had paid for it; she had welcomed the matrons with smiles over the counter, and had coaxed them into fresh purchases with persuasive affability—but what then? At that time it was *right* to be civil and obsequious—now it was *expedient* to "cut" them, and

drive their offspring elsewhere for instruction. She was not so "fond of the right" as to neglect the "expedient." Out the poor little boys went. They were pitilessly expelled, and she was happy.

Dire was the offence which this measure of expedience gave to the parties most interested. The matrons were not slow in reminding the bishop and his lady of their own origin. They gave vent, in language both loud and deep, to their sentiments on this occasion, and harassed and annoyed the dignitary and his partner beyond measure. Indeed, the parents were not the only persons who expressed an opinion on the subject which was unfavourable to the offenders. The good folks of "our town" were, it is true, in the habit of attending their parties, and sometimes invited them in return ; but on this occasion they displayed a singular degree of disinterestedness and high-minded principle. Although we were the friends of the bishop, we could not be blind to his faults, and justice compelled us to speak of them as they deserved.

The measure of expelling the little boys excited general displeasure. In fact, we all condemned the pride of the mushrooms, we all determined that it should be lessened, for everybody perceived it was a growing evil, and where would it end? Nobody could speak to the bishop or his tall wife on the subject, because, although friends, it might be deemed inconsistent with politeness, but we could all talk of it behind their backs, and we did.

No man likes to see pride in anybody but himself. Oh ! how we lashed it in our discussions, with what virtuous indignation, in our *faces*, did we reprobate the unchristian spirit of the bishop, and his Zantippe, and with what truly generous sympathy for the misguided beings, did we anticipate their ruin in consequence of their ambition. Yes, it was evident, everybody could see it clearly, the poor, ill-advised, and pride-deluded creatures had had their rise, and must have their fall. Everybody lamented. Then how sweetly did we speak of the advantages of genuine humility, and lowliness of heart. How arduously did we

assert that *we* ourselves, each, and all, and sundry, *never* could have done so, had *we* been placed in the same situation as the school-master and mistress. No, indeed, *we*, thank heaven, could not have been guilty of such conduct — it was so unfeeling, so ungrateful, so shameful, shocking, infamous, abominable,—everybody added an ejaculation at the end of the discussion, which expressed his separate opinion, and we concluded in a general chorus of indignation and horror.

Then we began to enquire very particularly into the causes which had induced us to suffer the bishop and his wife ever to become “one of *us*.” Why had we admitted them? We confessed they gave good dinners, and that they went even as far as forty-eight shillings for their port and sherry; we acknowledged that their wines and dinners were worth having, but we could not allow *that* to be any part of the consideration which induced us to patronise these upstarts. No, it was because we hoped the bishop had merit, which we all loved to encourage, and we had hoped that

both himself and partner would conduct themselves with becoming propriety. *Therefore* it was that we had countenanced them, but how had our good-nature been abused! It was shameful; indeed, it was enough to prevent persons from ever condescending to promote the interests of others in future. Like Paul Pry, we were almost about to protest that we would never do a good action again as long as we lived.

It was, indeed, a trying affair. Here were these upstarts, who sprang from nothing — absolutely nothing, raised by *us* to their present state in society, and now they were not only uplifted above themselves, but they were actually trying to raise themselves above *us*, their patrons. It could not be endured. Somebody, a lady, remembered that at a party, only a few days previously, the bishop's wife had thrust her tall form before her, and had actually had the assurance to take precedence of her in the passage to the supper-room. Was ever anything more presuming? And nobody knew how soon the case might be their own. We must exhibit firmness on such a momentous occasion.

It behoved us to do so — and we did. It was voted *nem. con.* that the bishop and his tall rib should be sent to Coventry forthwith.

This settled, we congratulated each other and ourselves upon our public spirit, and our resolute maintenance of the “rights of the people.” It was upon a patriotic and philanthropic principle we acted, and we valued ourselves accordingly. We had advocated the cause of the poor, we had resisted the encroachments of tyranny, and we thanked heaven for the pure spirit and the determination with which it had endowed us. Every one of us was satisfied with each other and ourselves.

This resolution was strictly put in execution. The poor bishop was completely stricken. He would have made concessions, but his wife prevented him. She carried it off with a high hand, affected to laugh at our displeasure, and turned up her sharp nose in immense disdain. This was adding fresh fuel to the fire of our displeasure. From being a general affair, it now assumed a degree of personal importance. Every one took up the cause as particularly



his own. At the bottom of the bishop's school-circulars was this awkward sentence: "A quarter's notice to be given before the removal of any pupil, or a quarter's schooling to be paid." This prevented any instant removal of such pupils as we could do as we pleased with; for, to pay a quarter for nothing was out of the question. We, however, had the *notices* sent, and invited a drunken old lieutenant in the navy to commence schoolmaster in opposition.

This was a master-stroke of policy. The bishop was horrified—even his wife's nose no longer curled. She feared for the treasury-department. They made concessions, confessed they had done those things which they should not have done, and left undone others which should have been done. They made a recantation of their errors, offered apologies, and hoped our pardon would not be refused. We generously gave it, and admitted them again into the clique.

The decree respecting the expulsion of the "little boys" was altered. They would be admitted to the school as before; but the

bishop, to prevent any inconvenience on that head, had, at the suggestion of his lady, a saving clause. His terms for day pupils were raised so high that the parents of the "nasty, little things" could not afford to pay for their education at his establishment. With this *we* could not have any thing to do. The bishop had admitted his error, his wife had done the same. They gave a very excellent party, to which we went, and all was comfortable. If the tradesmen could not pay the bishop his price, it was *their* affair, not *ours*. We had shown our philanthropy and our independence—we could do no more.

How ungrateful is the public after all that can be done for it! People are never satisfied. In our case this was exemplified in a manner that was extremely hurtful to our feelings. The people were discontented, although we had done so much for them. They were even so unjust as to assert that we had done *nothing*; that, in fact, things were just the same as before we meddled with them. They were vile enough to insinuate—yes, to insinuate broadly—that

the bishop's dinner had influenced us in the arrangement of the matter. How unjust and ungrateful is man !

The affair terminated thus. It was melancholy, but we consoled ourselves by the reflection that the patriots who had gone before us in the world had been abused falsely. The drunken lieutenant was made the second-rate schoolmaster, and the bishop's wife carried her head higher than ever.

It has been shown that the bishop became an altered man by means of his wife ; we shall now show that friendship, as well as matrimony, can change a man. " Save me from my friends," somebody has said, and everybody must have felt, or had reason to feel. About this time, " our town " was honoured by the arrival of Mrs. Dashaway, who soon occasioned a vast revolution in our opinions, sentiments, and affairs. It has been said that she was much struck with our want of polish and gentility, and determined to remedy these deficiencies. She set about it with vigour. One of her first attempts was upon the bishop, who

was again sent to school, and also his gaunt lady. With the latter she had not much difficulty. *She* had an aspiring mind, and longed to be genteel and fashionable. The transition was rapid. She became as haughty, insolent, and overbearing as heart could wish — rude, flaunting, and full of assurance as Mrs. Dashaway herself. The tutor and pupil were well pleased with each other.

But the bishop — poor Mrs. Dashaway was sorely puzzled with him. There was no end to the list of his defects. He walked like a duck — his toes in fraternal approximation, his heels widely separated. He was bashful and sheepish if addressed, he spoke thick and fast on ordinary occasions, and when he was resolved to be impressive, he spoke as if he was preaching a sermon, in the true nasal strain of the Wesleyans. He was round-shouldered and stooping in his gait, heavy in his countenance, abrupt in his manner, and Heaven knows what besides! Mrs. Dashaway “protested there was nothing genteel in or about him. To polish him would be an Augean labour. She could

not tell how to begin. He was the greatest brute she had ever beheld." All this and much more she said to those with whom she was intimate. But, however, she did begin, though it is not known where.

In a course of drilling which lasted many tedious months, and which she was on the point of giving up a score of times, she completely metamorphosed her awkward charge. What he *was* has been seen, but what he *is* nobody can tell. Gentility, if gentility it be, sits wondrous ill upon him. His step is mincing, and he is always looking at his toes, to see that they are wide enough apart. His address is affected, and he has contracted the lisp of a boarding-school girl whose front teeth are destroyed by eating sweetmeats. This is when he tries to be insinuating; at other times he is pompous, dogmatical, and solemn. Frequently he detects himself stooping, and his shoulders are drawn back with a sudden twitch, as if he felt the rough hand of a bailiff upon them. In short, he is never at ease. Always trying to be a gentleman, and to do away with the possibility of

its being suspected that he was not born one. His case must be very disheartening to him. He does deserve success certainly, though he cannot obtain it, for he is indefatigable in his attempts. Perhaps he is not conscious of his failure. I think not, for, to such a pitch has the desire to be genteel wrought him, that suicide would be the termination of his efforts, if he deemed them abortive.

Like all people who have no children, the bishop and his wife are ever railing against them, and blessing their stars that they are not troubled with any. I believe the lady is sincere—not so the gentleman; the breast of the former is case-hardened by pride. It is clear that it was never intended by nature “to still an infant’s cries.” But, from sundry glances which the bishop sometimes turns towards the offspring of his neighbours, I suspect he would have no objection to some of his own. It would be more than his eyes are worth for him to say so, poor man! for his gaunt wife is a tyrant. Every look that she throws towards her husband seems to say, “Thou shalt have

none other gods but me." The bishop endures his fate with resignation—" *necessitas*," &c. &c. He deserves a better fate, that's certain; for, notwithstanding his nonsensical pride, his *gaucheries*, and his ridiculous affectation, he has a good and kind heart, and would be charitable and generous, only his wife will not allow him to have his own way.

It was not long after the bishop had "finished his education" under his preceptress in gentility, that he was requested by a young lady of "our town" to write something in her album, a request with which he graciously complied. I have seen the production, which consisted of four lines only, and they related to the pertinacity which distinguishes some ladies in all matters when their own will is concerned. The two first I have forgotten, but I subjoin the last couplet, only regretting that any part of the bishop's very original composition should have escaped my memory.

For if she will, she *will*, you may depend on 't,  
And if she won't, she *won't*, and there's an *end* on 't.

There is no doubt that the truth of these

lines had been often forced upon the good clergyman. The very manner in which they were written shewed the depth of his feelings. Every letter was absolutely legible on the reverse side of the coloured paper, he must have dug the point of his hard pen into it with nervous energy, until he arrived at "*she won't.*" The remainder, "*and there's an end on 't,*" was more faintly developed, as if written by the feeble hand of despondency. He must have sighed as he finished, and I think it must have been about the moment he commenced the last letter in "*end ;*" there was a space between the *n* and *d*, which could only have been filled up by one of those deep and pathetic heavings of the breast which bespeak mortal agony, and expiring hope.

However, the lines were vastly applauded. They were given as original, and nobody in "*our town*" could gainsay that. Mrs. Dashaway, who loved a joke even at the expense of her friend, sent copies of the said production to the county newspapers, headed "*Lines, by the Rev. — Master of the — Boarding-*



School at ——” Mrs. Dashaway who could quiz anybody, went farther. She protested that it *was* a pity, indeed, a *shame*, that any one who had given such proofs of wit and genius should delay a moment in enriching the republic of letters with further lucubrations. The bishop’s lady, whose vanity was flattered by the supposition that her husband could be an author, warmly thanked her dear Mrs. Dashaway for the suggestion, and resolved at once it should be acted upon.

The bishop’s diffidence was an obstacle. He would have shrunk from publicity in that way. He was content to blazon forth his talents in the quiet snug circle of “our town.” There he was “the triton of the minnows” — the oracle. Whenever he opened his mouth we, good easy people, took it for granted that wisdom was coming forth. He was our second prodigy of learning. His Greek was the best to be found, always excepting that of his master, the curate; his Latin ditto; and though his pupils were never detected in any proficiency in their mother tongue, still, as *they* said and

*he* protested, they were excellent Greek and Latin scholars, we admired them and him. The bishop was on safe ground when he talked Greek to us, and whenever we seemed to gain any advantage over him in arguments on matters of everyday occurrence, he used to silence us with a quotation from Virgil or Horace, and we were "done." He knew his advantage, and he also knew, I suspect, the old saying, about "a prophet in his own country," &c. He did not wish to encounter people who might perchance know more than *we* of "our town." But that was all nothing—in his wife's consideration.

An author the bishop must be, and instantly too—an author he became. The first specimen that emanated from the press of his original genius and wit, was an octavo volume, published in London. We were absolutely raving with impatience to see it. It had been so cried up by Mrs. Dashaway, and other of the female *coterie* that visited the bishop's wife, that nobody doubted for one moment that a second Byron, at least, was about to shine upon us.

Our curiosity had been excited to the utmost. "The bishop is writing a work," said one. "The bishop's work is finished." "It is in the press." "It is coming out," said others, always taking care to preserve the secret as to the subject. "So clever! mustn't say what it is, but it will surprise you." We were terribly worked upon.

At length it came. A large parcel by the coach, heralded two larger ones, "per wagon." Of this due notice was given. Everybody believed it to be a poem. He had written the poetry in Miss ——'s album, and the work was in one volume. It was understood that a large copy, quarto, was to be presented to the bishop of the diocese, as a proof of our bishop's talents. Of course, then, it must be a poem on a sacred subject. It was evident that our bishop was to be a second Milton. It was remembered by several that our bishop had greatly criticised Montgomery's poem — "The Omnipresence of the Deity." It was clear that he intended to rival Montgomery. We would bet a thousand pounds he would beat him out

of the field, for the bishop was of "our town," and our pride was kindled.

A large party assembled at the house of Mrs. Dashaway on the day of the arrival of the copies of the work. It was produced by Mrs. Dashaway. She had not "read a word," she protested, and I believe her; "she would not anticipate her friends"—the volume was opened. Its title-page was enough for the most curious of us all. It ran thus—

**"SERMONS TO LITTLE BOYS.**

BY THE REV. — — —."

We were horrified. The bishop had been only sermonizing after all — and to the "nasty little things" that his wife so abused. We stood aghast, till the little doctor's wife observed that she "pitied the poor little boys; for what with being snarled at by the wife, and preached at by the husband, they must have a poor life of it."

Everybody tittered, and confessed the bishop's genius had been overrated. It had been at a premium, it was now below par. A per-

usal of the work itself did not raise it. There is no offence for which people punish a man more severely than for having been overrated, or too much praised. Man delights to pull down the idol he has set up; and the sin of his own injudicious applause is visited on the innocent subject of it. In proportion as an author has been elevated above his merits, is he frequently depressed below them.

One thing, however, in justice must be stated — there never was a title more judiciously selected than that which had been chosen for the bishop's production. The sermons were exactly calculated for "little boys" — very little boys indeed.

A year after another volume came forth, with the same title. The bishop then became defunct as an author, and lived only as a schoolmaster. The sermons were a losing speculation. Little boys don't like sermons: they were only fit for little boys, *ergo* nobody would buy. As many as possible were crammed into the school-bills of his scholars, but the proceeds of the work were . . . . . Alas!

## A WALK OUT OF THE TOWN.

"Give us kind keepers, Heaven! what were these?  
A living drollery."

It is a very warm day, dear reader, just such a day as the good folks in this part of the country term "inviting." No doubt its invitation will be tempting to many, who will forsake their "nooks and crannies," and roam through the green fields, over the steep hang-ers, or across the wide common. Just do me the favour to place your arm within mine, and we will sally forth together, and "see what we shall see." We will go up the road that leads to —, that prince of watering-places, the abode of pretty damsels, and the region of "pride and poverty," for that is our chief promenade, because the road is cleanest.

We cannot say much for the beauty of the entrances to "our town." It must be confessed, they are not so handsome as they might have been. This infernal sharp corner turning round by the side of our "head inn," has been very detrimental to drunken men and carriage pannels, to say nothing of wheels, poles, and shafts. The descent from the road where we are now going to walk is, as you see, very abrupt. *With* a shoe, or a drag-chain, and a dark night, the odds are nine to one you come down right upon that angle of bricks upon which no lamp ever sheds its lustrous beams—*without* a drag, they are nine hundred and ninety-nine to one that your horses are meat for the dogs, and that you are meet for the undertaker.

If you happen to come this way in a gig, with a high-spirited horse that is not particularly fond of being pressed by the breeching, or of having his hind-quarters near the dashing-iron, it is a moral certainty that the coroner will soon after make close inquiries about you. The verdict will be, "Died of a dark night,

and a brick-wall :” a shilling will be the fine upon the latter, and touching the former everybody will at once agree that “ it is a pity there was no moon !” No suggestion will ever be made about pulling the wall down, or of putting up lamps. The coroner has a great regard for that same piece of architecture. It has brought him more business than any other thing in the county.

Regarding lamps, our people are not prone to innovations. Lamps, indeed, are things that awaken painful reminiscences in their minds. They were actually once persuaded by the *ci-devant* parish-clerk and schoolmaster before-mentioned, to entertain “ proposals for lighting the town.” This worthy voluntarily took upon himself all the trouble of collecting subscriptions, and of superintending the affair afterwards. Our innocent people were “ done.” They subscribed. The schoolmaster had a lamp placed up before his own house, and nowhere else. Shortly after, he took the subscription and himself off to the West Indies, where he now is enlightening the understandings of the



sables. He left our people in darkness, and so they have remained ever since. It is a sore subject now. If any man were to venture upon such an improvement, he would be suspected of a conspiracy to defraud.

The entrance of "our town" is the exit from life. It is a perfect man-trap, out of which you cannot escape, go which way you will. You arrive at the top of the hill; it is dark, and you do not perceive its steepness. Your horse is suffered to go on at a slow trot; the weight of the vehicle propels him; he goes on at the rate of eight—ten—twelve—fourteen miles an hour. You begin to have an idea that you are going faster than necessary. You pull up; your horse won't, or can't, and it is pretty much the same; he gallops—you feel "so so." You pull the harder; he shakes his head. Again you pull, and cry out to him to stop!—he gets the bit between his teeth, and doesn't care a rush for you. You are flustered; you mean to jump out, but before you can make up your mind whether it shall be over the side or the back of the gig, bang you

go against the corner of the house, and all is over! Supposing (for miracles do sometimes happen) — supposing that your horse does not go too near the first inn, he goes straight forward, just across the road to the second, and is dashed to atoms against the wall of their stable-yard: if he should turn to the left, he goes against the market-house; if he goes to the right, he batters down the front of Doctor Slaimour's house, and takes a patient or a subject to his very door.

Having now gained the top of the hill, we will take a brief survey of surrounding objects, and then proceed onwards. To the right is the jovial and happy abode of our patriarchal and hospitable king of "good fellows," who there enjoys, after plodding and toiling through his youth and the prime of his manhood, the *otium cum dignitate* of old age. It is a comfortable abode, remarkable for its neat and white appearance, but as that and its truly respectable owner deserve closer inspection than can be given in a "walk," we will, if you please, reader, make a separate excursion

to call upon the hearty old man, who ten to one will be "at home," and will give us a kind welcome, a rough shake of the hand, and the best of good cheer. To-morrow, perhaps, we will go, and now take note of other things.

Here also we have a very pretty and striking view of "the ruins," as they are generally termed. They look to advantage gilded by the fierce rays of the noonday sun, and having the piece of water called "the pond," beyond them. These ruins are all that remain of the abbey that once adorned "our town," and which was founded by the ecclesiastical dignitary whose abode stood on the site of the dwelling now called "the abbey." They give an air of antiquity and respectability to this shabby place, which the natives are ill able to appreciate. They have no more respect for these classical remnants of the days that are gone, than their pigs have. One of the finest portions of the ruin has been turned into a vile cow-shed and a pig-stye ! The beautiful crown and mantle of ivy that it had so long worn were stripped off, and the roof covered with a bar-

barous thatch, and the walls daubed with white-wash ! Talk of Goths, if you will, after this.

Ruins are one of the chief characteristics that distinguish an old country from a new one. The fact is, and I may as well declare it at once, I am an enthusiastic admirer of these fragments of the days of antiquity. I have travelled over great portion of the "new world," and have felt as an ardent admirer of nature, all the beauties of its lovely scenery, in which the simple and the sublime alike charm the eye. The broad Savannah and the soaring mountain, the wide Prairie and the dashing waterfall, the huge lake and the majestic river, have each in turn awakened the sympathies of the heart, and excited the imagination ; but I have felt more pleasure in viewing these classical remains of former times which distinguish the old world. In the former the eventful history of man is, in a great measure, to come ; in the latter much of it is past, and the mind is irresistibly carried back to eras of departed grandeur.

In the contemplation of a hoary and august

pile, like that we now view, slumbering in the leaden doze of time, amidst the ever-varying and ever-new features of nature, there is a lesson involuntarily learned of empire's ruin and man's decay. This is, perhaps, the real melancholy charm that hovers about these venerable mementos, and that entrances the soul. Does it not also subdue the heart from its too frequently overwhelming pride to the consciousness that there is little reason for such vanity? The heart that could not be thus levelled must be proud and insensible indeed. How many generations have passed away into nothingness—how many thousands have perished in forgetfulness since these walls were first proudly reared, is a question that must occur to the mind of every one who views all that now is left of them with the eye of sober reflection. And do they not also seem to say, What a brief span have you also to run, who now, in the pride of manhood and vigour of health, look upon the mouldering turrets now fast sinking to the earth! How short the time ere you, like those who raised them, are levelled with the dust!

In our town I have never been at home, the inhabitants have never been at home with me. I dwell here as if none knew of such a being ; and perhaps I have indulged too much in the desire that none should know of it. I am a silent spectator of the mighty scene. At first, I was an object of curiosity, the " lion of a day." From this state of honourable renown, which any other stranger—a travelling tinker, would have shared equally with myself, I soon fell. My fall was great. The good people saw I was not one of themselves. They could make nothing of me. I was an useless member of society. I could not brew good beer, and did not care to drink it ; and I always had an aversion to bacon. I sank into the abyss of obscurity. This was a necessary consequence. Any member of a community who is neither useful nor ornamental will be neglected. If I could have drunk their beer and praised their pork, or taken part in a glee, as the bold captain did of whom honourable mention has been made, I should have received their attentions, and should have deserved them. As it was, I was

soon made to feel that a man has no chance of being known to the world who makes no noise in it. I was therefore compelled to exercise my philosophy. I bore it, I think, "tolerably well considering," as the phrase goes. I was not quite in despair, and I did not lay violent hands upon myself.

One thing however you, dear reader, will perceive I was obliged to do in my own defence—that is, to live to myself. I kept an observant eye upon what was going forward, but did not make or meddle with it. If I paid the "rates," I was troubled about "parish-business" no farther; they could "settle it better amongst themselves." So thought they, and truly so do I think. I should cut a poor figure at a "vestry." I should be as much "at home" there, as was Lord Goderich at the head of an administration. Their concerns do not interest me, I never interfere with them, and they would not let me if I would. One of the most sensible—I was about to say the *only* sensible question that I ever heard put by the inhabitants generally, was upon an ill-judged

proposition emanating from one of my acquaintance, that I should be elected a member of "the select." What should *he* know about it? said they, one and all. Who could deny the force of this?

Thrown thus upon my own resources, I lead a solitary but not a miserable life. If I do get a fit of the blue devils, I gallop off to the marshes, where I try to shoot snipes and bury the vapours in the mud. On this spot, or by the side of the pond, from whence a superior view is gained by moonlight, I often stand gazing at the slowly-waning ruin chastened by the sweet silvery moonbeams, that seem to throw a halo of heavenly light round its time-honoured head; and at the young aspiring ivy climbing up its broad bosom, like infancy twining its arms round the neck of age. I stand silently gazing at these features of beauty till I feel my mind gradually taking a retrospective flight through that long series of years that have glided since these walls were erected. In sight of this place I may be said to live in that pleasing existence of reverie and



imagination which is, after all, the happiest that can be enjoyed. It would never do for me to disclose these sensations and feelings to the natives of "our town;" if I did, they would vote me a madman, and put me in a strait-waistcoat — even you, dear reader, may begin to have suspicions. We will walk on.

It is exceedingly warm, as we have found, and as that stout woman feels who has just drawn up her fourteen stone to the top of the hill. That is our little curate's wife. She wipes her forehead—for, Heaven's sake, ma'am, don't go too near the cheek! — ah! it is done, and see how her white cambric blushes deep red! She knows we see it, and is in a twitter. If we walk on, she will recover from her temporary confusion; if we stop, ten to one she has a faint. There is somebody on before us. "A couple of young ladies," you say, reader, eh? Wait a bit.

There, now what do you think? yes, I see you shudder—you have got a cold chill. Take my advice, never judge of age by the figure in

these days of tight lacings and bustles. That old woman, whose waist is squeezed to the circumference of that of a girl of fifteen, is the inhabitant of a small cottage in the lane leading from our back-street, where she gives "tea and turn-outs," and where more scandal is retailed and invented than in any other house in the kingdom. This woman's juvenile figure and mincing step sadly deceive those who walk behind her—as you know, reader, already; and there is scarcely anything in nature or out of it so hideous as her countenance. The only thing that I ever saw resembling it in form and expression was the face of a shrivelled monkey, the upper half of which was ingeniously sewed to the tail of a dried cod-fish, and exhibited at a country-fair as a mermaid. The colour of the last creature was considerably darker than that of this lady's face, which made it more tolerable to look upon. Her hue is a soiled yellow: bile and jaundice, mixed with sun-freckles. She has used as much of "Rowland's Kalydor" as would drown her twice over to no purpose. And those detestable false ringlets,

hanging like petite corkscrews round her forehead, add to the vileness of the picture, for a picture it is, though badly painted. The whole is surmounted by wreaths of flowers—a yellow skeleton, of sixty mortal years at least, adorned with false ringlets and artificial flowers!

Look at her bust, for she wears no shawl. To all appearance it is round and full, just as it might possibly have been forty years ago; and the trim-cut collar, worked into sundry devices, is fastened by a brooch low enough to exhibit her meagre and bilious-looking neck. But enough, reader—I see you are disgusted. This is the old lady who was presumed to have the “thing born” by our sage “chemist” some time since.

The little girl who is with her, who, to judge of her more steady and less affected walk, one might suppose was her elder sister—that is, if walking behind them—is a resident-pupil. She is said to be a natural daughter of somebody in high life. It is scarcely possible. From her stiffness of manner, formality, and dullness of countenance,

and her freezing temper, she must rather be the child of discontented matrimony. She has a tolerably good mouth, but it is like the mouths she makes in her own drawing-book. It is frequently drawn up, and pursed by a peculiar motion, like the mouth of her "silk-bag." She cannot be an illegitimate; "old Lot's" eldest daughter, who is no mean authority, declared it impossible. She is not without abilities, which, if properly cultivated, would render her in time accomplished; but the old lady, her preceptress, is deplorably ignorant, and undoes all that masters and mistresses can do in occasional lessons. The pupil is taught many things, but will know nothing. That is her misfortune.

We are now within sight of the bridge that crosses the road over a stream running from our town to Burleigh, which is the favourite haunt of our little doctor and the other idlers of the place. There are two persons upon it. "Who are they?" you ask. When we get nearer, I will tell you. Oh! there is the little doctor himself, and the chemist too, by all

that's mischievous! They are strolling out to enjoy the fine day, and to talk ill-naturedly of every one in the place and out of it that they know. Seemingly, they have talked themselves out of breath or materials, for they are now silent, and amusing their active minds by spitting over the bridge into the water. Watching the creeping of beetles, or the widening of the circles they are now making in the stream, is sufficient employment for them, till mischief induces either of them to start fresh game in the shape of slander, or until some unhappy creature passes of whom they know something they have now forgotten.

These personages are tolerably fair specimens of that class of indolent beings who lounge through life without any useful exertion. The occupations they have chosen are just enough to form an apology for doing nothing. Idleness is their passion. The doctor *talks* of the felicity of men who live by "the sweat of their brow," and threatens to do so himself one day in some far distant land, where he has placed his imaginative *el dorado*. In reality, he is

too indolent to button his own gaiters, and regards any useful exertion as the greatest curse of humanity. To do nothing, and to talk of doing everything, is the employment for him. But he works very hard, for all that, in his own way, which we shall see by and by. The chemist eats and talks wonderfully. He goes into every man's house who will tolerate him, partakes of all he can get, rolls away to another, where he backbites his last host, and will serve his present entertainer the same as soon as he arrives at another seat of hospitality.

We are now arrived at the foot of another hill, very steep, rugged, and awkward to bad riders, as the little doctor has especially proved. It was on this hill that he cracked the knees of his thick-winded pony, and battered his own nose to a shapeless pulp that he was obliged to bury in a poultice for nine successive nights. We will "the tale unfold." He was in a violent hurry, as all people are who have nothing to do, and tried to gallop down the hill. At the top of it he had been warned of the probable result, by the tall, thin

old farmer that lives at the white cottage on the brow, who very prudently distrusted the "shaky" legs of the doctor's steed. The doctor, however, saw some ladies coming up the hill, and determined to establish himself as a bold rider ; besides, it would give him the appearance of being on a "life-and-death" piece of business. A fig for the old man's warning. In went the spurs, on went the pony at a fearful rate, both steed and rider were amazed at their own speed. About half way down the doctor felt it likely that the pony would reach the bottom before him. Daylight was visible between him, and his saddle, one stirrup was lost, and the other was round his ankle. His hat was far behind, and the legs of his nankeens were above his knees, disclosing a pair of "list" garters. The lappels of his coat flew back over his arms, and the skirts thereof stuck out as far behind as they could. The doctor had not the adhesive quality of his plaister ; with great difficulty he had kept his seat so far. At every bound he flew up so high from the pony's back that it was hardly to be hoped he

would ever descend again. The ladies, poor things, were scared. They turned back, and ran down the hill, and though the pony was at the "top of his *speed*," as his master termed it, the affrighted damsels beat him hollow.

The doctor now became seriously alarmed for his individual safety, as he afterwards said, and with a despairing effort checked the violence of his "Arabian." The sudden "pull up," threw the pony down. The doctor was pitched as far over his head as the length of the stirrup-leather would permit, and his nose came into no gentle contact with a flint. One of the ladies thought it only decent to faint on such an occasion. What less could she do? The doctor's blood ran fast, and the pony's synovia ran faster. Both crawled slowly home, the former leading the latter with one hand, and holding his maltreated nasal organ, then swollen to the size of a huge black-pudding, with the other. From that hour the doctor relinquished horsemanship. He sold the pony for forty-five shillings, halter, currycomb, and brush included. He was much pleased with



the sentimentality of the lady who fainted. Few things gratify us so much as unexpected sympathy at the moment we have suffered a signal discomfiture. The faint must have been well done, for the doctor once said she looked "so interesting," that he "could not help liking her;" indeed, "if he had not been married, he thought it very likely he should have——" The sentence was not finished, for at that moment Mrs. Assington, his wife, critically popped her head into the room, and the doctor looking at me very significantly, said, "Have you seen the paper to-day? I want to know if the four per cents are up?"

There is a party on before us, a large one too, and the Bishop of Burleigh is amongst them. There is the bishop's wife, the grenadier of the company. There must be something going on this way. A cricket-match on the common, perhaps. Yes, it must be so, there goes a boy with two bats on his shoulders. That very talkative lady, with the thin face and dark complexion, looking like a shrivelled prune, is one whose daughters are nume-

rous. How many she has is best known to herself, no one else can tell, I believe. She very industriously tries to get them off, but she does not succeed. She keeps the house of her brother, who has retired from an Indian life with a major's commission, a huge liver, and some few hundreds per annum. They make a joint-stock concern of the domestic matters.

The major keeps a couple of horses miscalled "hunters." However, he rides upon them after the hounds, and thinks he is hunting. Even that is something. His coat on such occasions is red, his face greenish yellow. His temper is as hot as curry, his pride is vast. There is the man, walking between his second sister, who is the better half of our "head lawyer," and her lively, little, round-faced daughter. He is nearly two yards long, and is what the ladies term a "genteel figure. He talks much of war and hot climates, and fights his battles o'er again, for the edification of his auditory, with great energy, whenever opportunity offers.

His sisters have the character of being

“good managers.” They have studied practical economy, not because they relish it, but because they are compelled, the one by a slender income, and a long string of daughters, the other by a parsimonious husband. The daughters of the first are curiosities in their way. They rank “accomplishments,” which mean, ill-using a piano forte, painting butterflies, and daubing heads, as essentially necessary to their future success. Unfortunately they have not the means of procuring any regular instruction, and they are the pests of all their acquaintance. They convert every young lady they know into a drawing or a music mistress. Their desire to gain knowledge is great, and is pursued by every means they can devise. Their mother is always on the tramp to her neighbours, to request the favour of allowing her daughters to be present while Miss —— takes her lesson, of the drawing-master.” They patiently submit to hints, sneers, and insults, for the sake of gaining their purpose. Their cousin, the lawyer’s pet daughter, hath no particular affection for them. They use her colours, borrow her

music, her books, "convey" her drawing-paper, and other things, in the "most provoking manner," and the little lady hath a quick temper. She becomes irascible—pouts—tells her papa; papa lectures mamma for encouraging her poor relations; mamma remonstrates with aunt, aunt sympathises with her daughters, and there is a general disturbance, which is heard all over the town. A temporary division takes place. Aunt complains to uncle, the major—the major curses the whole generation, and desires to "hear no more about such nonsense."

Not meeting the sympathy she requires at home, aunt flies to her neighbours, tells her tale of woe, gets pitied to her face, and laughed at "behind her back." But she finds relief in "opening her mind." She reveals the whole family budget, enters into a tedious history of private affairs, and shows very clearly, to herself, that she and her "dear girls" were cheated by the lawyer, who, when he married her sister, got the management of "all the property" into his own hands, and "kept everything himself. And now, after all that," she

adds, "they will not lend my poor injured children a piece of music." We, as in "duty bound," pity the "dear girls," and their mamma. We retail the story of the lawyer's villany, as it is generally termed, wherever we go, and if we meet the gentleman the next hour we are full of smiles, and have great pleasure in seeing him so well.

The "injured daughters" are awkward girls. Their complexions unite the hues of milk-and-water and yolks of eggs. One of them is a poetess—termed by some of her relatives a genius. Her mother anticipates in her a second L. E. L., and often exclaims, "*my* dear girls will do better than other people's, who have had hundreds thrown away upon their education." Most other people think the poetess a little cracked. It is said she was once very lively; but she had a cross in one of those delicate, and trying "affairs of the heart," and suddenly took to grief. She writes desperate poetry. So woe-begone are her strains, that they give one a cold chill. Like Philomel, she sings with a thorn in her breast; and at

every fresh strain it seems that somebody pushes it farther in ; indeed, if her breast were not the tenderest of all breasts, the point must have been worn out by constant pressure long since. She has enriched the columns of our country newspapers occasionally with " Lines," and " Stanzas," generally beginning with " Ah ! me," and ending with " alas !" During the progress of her inspirations she gets pensive, pathetic, melancholy, morbid, misanthropic, and bitter. The sum of her writings is that " woman is made to mourn." Her friends call this sensibility, and profundity of thought. The acuteness of her grief blinds her to all that is worth living for—to die seems to be the delight of her imagination. Latterly she has taken to abusing the world in a heap, and it is strongly suspected she will give it a " thorough setting down" before she has done with it. Her depth of thought hath not, as yet, gone so low as to reach grammatical accuracy.

The temperature of her manners in society is that of her poetry—about twenty degrees below the freezing point. If there is mirth

afloat, she is as easy as a "hen on a hot girdle," and just as fidgety. If any one laughs, she sighs, and wonders at their want of "sensitivity." Smiles are dagger-points to her. She is ready to cry, "woe! woe!" upon every demonstration of joy. With what a sublime pity she regards all mankind. She does not feel as a creature of this world—she has renounced the vain warfare of prejudice, and passion, and sorrow; and lives in perpetual self-absorption. She looks upon us poor citizens of this sublunary sphere with the pitying eye of one who hath acquired a knowledge of immortal nature. She regards our worldly pursuits as one who has freed herself from all the vexations and trifling obligations of humanity, and lifts herself upwards to a lofty and mysterious communion quite beyond our reach. Truly we are a contemptible race in her estimation! Happy would it be for us if, like her, we could be in the world, but not of it. She is "like the blasted and solitary pine of the forest," she expressively says, "which the lightning has scathed and withered, and left

standing alone in its own desolation, surrounded by the companions of its former days, who still live in verdure and gaiety." In short, she is as much at home in this world of ours, as a dead man would be at a ball.

It is recorded of this lady, that, meeting a poor woman, one of the "unfortunates," who carried a child, she apostrophised the little unconscious being in the most vehement manner, denouncing it as one born to deceive; for she had presumed it to be a male until its mother assured her of the mistake. She then mourned over it as one born to be betrayed.

"How soon," said she, "will those bright eyes, now radiantly gleaming, and shedding their lustre over that beauteous face, like orbs in the pure firmament above—how soon will they be dimmed by tears, and lustreless! How soon will thy beauty fade—thy unsuspecting heart be deceived—thy innocence prove thy downfall! Like a gentle flower crushed by the rude and heedless step of some wanton rover, thou wilt be trampled into the earth. Would to Heaven thy cruel fate might be averted; but it may



not be! Thou art doomed, doomed, doomed. Like all thy sex, thou art doomed to be the victim of base, heartless man—a sacrifice to thy own exquisite feelings and sensibility. It is so—it must be so—for who can avert the will of fate? Fare thee well, babe—fare thee well—alas!”

The mother of the denounced at first fancied our prophetess was a fortune-teller; but as she departed so widely from the rule of the gypsies, who always promise *good*, she took the inspired young damsel for a “cunning woman,” and was actively debating within herself the propriety of putting a stop to the child’s career, rather than allow it to live under such an accumulation of evils. She had not understood much of the damsel’s jargon; but she had heard enough about the *men*, and to the justice of her remarks concerning that “false-hearted crew” *she* was prepared to swear, if necessary. She had been “a victim” to their “flattering tongues” herself, and her child was to be the same. She would drown it at once. Luckily an old woman came along the road just as the

child was about to be poked into a muddy ditch that stood invitingly near, and, having some suspicions, inquired "what was the matter?" The matter was explained, and the old woman calmed the mother's fears by observing that the lady was "only a half-cracked creature that lost her wits in looking for a husband, and, bad as she called the men, would have any one of them that offered; indeed, that was the only chance she had of being brought to her senses."

## THE TURNPIKE-GATE.

THE gossipry that we have had along the road, gentle reader, has beguiled the time, and we are now at the turnpike-gate, kept by a merry, chatty, good-humoured, and indefatigable old woman of "fourscore-and-four," as she, with considerable self-complacency, informs everybody who will listen to her personal details, which are generally of some length.

The gate-house is a little, ordinary, brick building, like most of such places in the country, having a swing-gate reaching across the road, through which the old lady would not let an angel pass unless the toll was paid. In addition to this occupation, which, by the way, is nearly a sinecure, the subject of this chapter is one of the carriers between "our town" and

the town of —, the watering-place, elsewhere alluded to; and a more punctual, trustworthy old creature, cannot be found. She is, indeed, an example of humble worth, and sterling integrity but too seldom presented, and her virtues, if transplanted to any soil, would not disgrace it.

For years this excellent specimen of honest industry performed her laborious duties *on foot*, walking to the town we have referred to, and back, a distance of *twenty miles*, besides making her numerous “*calls*” at *both* places for parcels, orders, &c. &c. and generally carrying a load on her aged back that would have tired many of the strongest of the opposite sex in the prime of their manhood. Think, ye sons of affluence, who revel in luxury and wanton in idle profuseness—think of this aged creature of eighty winters, bending beneath a weight, in all the inclemency of the worst seasons, during so long a journey, that your effeminate limbs would shrink under! To the disgrace of our town and human nature, this was permitted, and so slender was the encourage-

ment given her, that the poor old "dame" could scarcely get a subsistence.

To add to her difficulties she has a son, a poor boy, as she affectionately calls him, who is upwards of sixty years of age, and who, having spent the greatest part of his life at sea, has returned home "all to pieces," as his mother terms it, "and not fit to earn a penny for himself." Like many men who have been at sea a length of time, he is unequal to any employment on shore, and his impaired constitution renders it impossible for him to venture again upon the ocean. He has a wife too, and three or four helpless children, like all very poor men; and the whole of them rely chiefly, if not solely, upon the "dame," for their daily support. Nor is their reliance misplaced. The affectionate creature toils incessantly and cheerfully for them, and seems to require no further satisfaction or reward than to know that their wants are supplied, and that she is, to use her own simple but honest phrase, "out of debt, and out of danger."

After many years of pedestrian toil, she suc-

ceeded in saving sufficient to purchase a small cart and a donkey. Misfortune, however, attended the "dame" in this affair. It has been remarked that to see a dead donkey is exceedingly rare. Such an event, in our neighbourhood at least, is so uncommon, that, up to the period of which we are writing, the oldest man did not remember anything of the kind, and as the oldest man is one who in all places is regarded as an indisputable authority, it was generally believed in our town that donkeys could *not* depart this life.

Our little doctor has often been heard to argue in favour of the "immortality of asses," and the Bishop of Burleigh is, or was in danger of becoming a convert to his opinion. The dame of the turnpike-gate saved him from committing himself, and she was only just in time. Her donkey died ! Such a fact could scarcely be believed. Natural history was ransacked. Asses alive were accurately described by many authors, ancient and modern, but nothing was said of asses defunct. Our savans held a general assembly on the occasion

—an asinine jury. They examined their departed brother, and finally came to the conclusion that asses must die, and brought in a verdict, after four hours' careful deliberation, that this ass in particular "died by the visitation of a hard winter, and a paucity of greens." It was immediately duly entered upon the notebooks of our learned men, that asses are not immortal.

The next purchase our dame made was equally unfortunate. It was a pony — for she was sick of asses. She had been so interrupted in her business by requests to furnish particulars of the last moments of the defunct, and instead of "orders," had received only a tedious succession of questions, that it became a serious matter. If, therefore, our dame was sick of asses, it was not to be wondered at. She said she would have nothing to do with them in future, if she could help it; but somebody, evil-disposed, stole the pony. When the dame went early one morning to get him off the common, where he was "turned out" at night to get his living, that she might commence her

daily journey, he was "*non est inventus.*" Bills were posted, headed after the usual fashion — "Stolen or strayed," but the pony never strayed back again.

It was said that about that time, a pony of small size made his appearance, early one morning, at the door of the boiling-house attached to the kennel of the — hounds; but as the visit was paid without his skin, and minus his head, there were no certain means of legally proving his identity. The huntsman, indeed, swore there was every *moral* proof the carcase he had bought *must* be that of the dame's pony, because, like the negro's pig, though little, it was very old. The dogs tried in vain to tear or masticate it, and some of them were well-nigh choked in their desperate efforts to swallow their allotted portions of indigestible flesh. One of them, it was reported, died of dyspepsia occasioned by this unfortunate meal. From these circumstances it was inferred that the dame's pony was "buried in the bowels of the pack."

Nothing remained now for the poor old



woman but to sell her cart, for she could not afford to buy another pony, and to have recourse to her own legs again. But the report of her loss was rapidly spread. Her case was admitted to be a hard one, and she was commiserated by many. The Bishop of Burleigh kindly undertook to write a petition for her, and took the trouble of collecting subscriptions. Another pony was thus obtained, and the dame was once more happy. Since that she has jogged on smoothly, without any misfortune. Her son drives her, and assists her in the labours of her office, while his wife remains at home to “keep the gate.”

There were dreadful apprehensions excited some time ago for the fate of this trio—that is to say, the dame, her son, and the pony, to add nothing of the fears entertained for the safety of the various parcels with which she had been intrusted. They did not arrive home at the usual time, nor all that night. Next morning, at daybreak, they were sought anxiously; the least that was expected was that the dame and her son would be found with their “throats

cut from ear to ear," and "weltering in their gore." They were found in the cart fast asleep amongst the parcels, the pony in the shafts fast asleep also. It was very extraordinary, everybody said. Had they taken laudanum? "No;" the old woman declared, with infinite *naïveté*, that they had "taken nothing stronger than brandy; a *leetle* of that—only just enough to keep the cold out." Whether they had given the pony something to "keep the cold out" was not said. He was always a drowsy little fellow, and needed no composing draught.

There is the old lady herself. Short, thick, but yet strong and active. Her frame is bowed by age and toil; but her "spirit," to quote her own words, "is good." Her memory is astonishingly correct, save—yes, there is a saving clause—save only when she takes "a leetle drop to keep the cold out." Her features are strong and shrewd; the keen eye and high cheek-bones denote her origin, which is Scottish, and of this she is not a little proud. Her father was out in the "forty-five." Repeat any portion of "Waverley" to her, and she will believe

it. Indeed, it is very likely that she has "heard her father speak o' that." She will believe any and everything that is said or written about the "forty-five," provided only that it be not to the disparagement of the "Stuarts" or their adherents. She is highly indignant if the participators in the eventful scenes of those days are called "rebels." "They were fightin' for their ain land and their ain king," she protests, with great vehemence, "and what else wad they fight for?"

She loves whisky, and venerates the memory of her father. Of the former she says, "Wi' ane gulp of mountain-dew and a bannock, I'll do mair wark than half the Englishers, wi' a' their beef." Of her father she says, "He was a brae lad in thae days, when a' were brae. Mony bigger men ye might see, but de'il a better." It is remarkable that she has lost all the accent of her country in ordinary conversation, by a long-continued residence amongst us; and yet, if her recollections are brought back to the days of her youth, and the feelings

which she still fondly cherishes for her country are awakened, it at once rushes upon her as vividly as if she had but just crossed the border, as we shall now presently see.

“ Well, dame, how does this hot weather agree with you ? ”

“ Pretty well, thank you, sir, considering that I am fourscore and four, and have to work hard. It makes me a *leetle* thirsty, that’s all. I can work as well in hot weather as cold—one is all the same as another when we have the *will*, but, when the will is wanting, the weather is a good excuse. I sometimes wish the malt was cheaper, because then, sir, a body might have a drop of their own, and that is so handy ! ”

“ But have you heard the news, dame ? It is said they are going to take the duty off Scotch whisky.”

“ Ech, sir, but that’s unco’ welcom’ ! I ne’er heard a blither bit news sin’ my puir Jamie—that’s my ain gude man that was—fund twal goldin guineas a’ dune up in ane auld night-

cap. I'll ha' a stoup o' the best, ony way, if it's a' true."

"What is there going forward on the common to-day?"

"Only a parcel of young men going to play at cricket, sir; and where young men be, young women will be *too*, you know—there's no helping it. I was the same myself once; wherever Jamie was, there was I sure to be. Aweel, aweel, he is gane! and most o' these young anes must gae the same gate by and by, and mayhap leeve some behind like me to miss 'em when they're gane! But few of 'em will last as long as I have, sir, and I'm not worn out yet; but it's the Scotch bluid, sir—the Scotch bluid does it. Scotch bluid against the world!"

Now, reader, you have had a specimen of the old woman herself. She is one of our *worthies*. Pity it is there are so few! Her undeviating honesty, industry, and frugality, combine to render her one of the most respectable characters within a large circuit of

“our town.” She is respected too, and long may she be so! Living or dead, no parish-fund will ever be drained for her use; she will work to the last, “and” she with laudable pride says, “there will be enough left to bury me.”

## THE RETURN.

WHEN the celebrated Duchess de Berri was invited by a party of English gentlemen to do them the honour of being present at a cricket-match which they were about to play, and which they, of course, thought must be interesting to everybody, the good lady accepted the *invite* with much satisfaction, anticipating great pleasure from the novelty of the scene, and no doubt thinking it was something very extraordinary. The day came, and so did the cricketers, and so did the duchess. The latter quietly received and paid her usual compliments, and sat herself down in one of the tents to eat sweetmeats. The cricketers began a most interesting game, and played their best. They bowled, batted, fielded, perspired, and attitudinized in the most superior style: they outplayed them-

selves on this occasion, for the Duchess de Berri was one of the spectators. To the lady all this was like "whistling jigs to mile-stones." She knew nothing about it, and thought less. She saw a man hopping here, a ball hopping there, and so on, and conceiving these were some necessary preliminaries, she coolly turned about again to her sweetmeats. When she had eaten some four or five hours, and waited as she imagined with all the condescension of a princess of the house of Bourbon, she desired one of her suite to "make her compliments to the English gentlemen, and to inquire when they were going to begin?" The lady then was informed that the game was about half finished. This was too much even for French politeness. The Duchess de Berri said not a word, ate not another mouthful, but walked off.

The cricket-match is just beginning on the common, and between you and me, reader, we cannot do better than follow the Duchess de Berri's example. Cricket may be all very well for those who are playing; it may afford some interest to those who have bets, but it is ter-



ribly dull work for those who merely look on ; more especially in a match like this — and indeed all others played by the folks of our town and parish, who have about the same idea of cricket as they have of quadrilles. I am set down as a man without taste by those who think “batting” and “bowling” the first things in the world ; but no matter. In addition to my want of taste, I fancy I perceive a heavy rain coming, which renders it advisable for us to be jogging back again. We shall meet plenty of the natives, for they are very curious people, and if they were to receive intelligence that two crows were to perch upon a tree five miles off at a certain hour, they would go to have a look at them.

“What sort of a person is that in the large, lumbering phaeton, painted bright yellow, and drawn by a horse seventeen hands high or thereabouts?”

Be patient, reader, and you shall hear. That is a curiosity worth seeing ; if we had seen nothing else in this morning’s ramble, we should have been paid for our trouble. That is a “*serious dancing-master*” — a man that teaches

dancing only as an exercise, not as an amusement. He plays upon a serious fiddle—a fiddle out of which it seems that he could not extract a note that was not serious. He talks of dancing for exercise, and makes his pupils walk through their quadrilles at the rate of a mile an hour. He tried once to teach gallopades, but it would *not* do; try as hard as he would, he could not move fast enough, and the fiddle would not be hurried. He gave it up as a bad job. He goes long journeys to teach the rising generation how to exercise, and he is very punctual in his attendance; indeed he never misses, only when his sulky old horse refuses to have the bridle put over his head, and to open his mouth for the bit. Four hours and twenty minutes he is said to have tried the beast on one occasion, by all the gentle means in his power, (for he thinks “a man of kindness to his beast is kind,” and will not allow the animal to be beaten,) and he did not succeed at last. He took a bed at the inn where the horse had been put up to feed, and waited coolly till next morning when his horse happened to be in a good humour.

It is manifest that he hath also taught his horse to "exercise" by his pace! he moves about as fast as his pupils. He gets out to walk up every hill, and so used is the horse to this practice, that unless she did he might sit in the phaeton till the springs gave way before he could persuade the animal to move a yard upwards. Notwithstanding his eccentricities, our serious dancing-master has many good qualities. He is kind and charitable, and acts at least upon principle, in defiance of ridicule. That huge pocket in the side of the chaise is filled with religious tracts, which he carefully distributes to all the children and poor people he meets on the road. On Sunday mornings he assumes the office of teacher in a Sunday-school. He is a just man, and no more need be said of any man.

There is the old gentleman from the white house coming up the hill in his phaeton and pair, with the old lady, and their two daughters. The expression of comfort and independence which is in that man's face fully expresses his possession of wealth. There is a

great sympathy between the spirits and the breeches-pocket. If it be low-water with the one, it is generally ebb-tide with the other. You may always tell the extent of a man's cash by his countenance, if you watch it closely. Physicians may talk of the "action of the heart," and "symptoms in the precordia;" they may ascertain the movements of that organ by stethoscopes; in fact, they may talk and do as much as they please, but they will not be a whit the better acquainted with the disease. Let them consult the action of the man's gold, and "sound" his pocket, they will arrive at the truth, and know how to cure it if they will try the right way. Talk of the "influence of imagination on diseases"—pish! *Money* is imagination: who ever had any imagination without it? I know an author who, when his pocket is empty, has a vacuum in his head, and turns his attention to dull translations; but no sooner does he replenish than he is sporting about amidst epigrams, odes, and sonnets, or revelling in the bright regions of romance. There is another gentleman, too, a

politician, who is also similarly affected. The paper is supposed to lead some portion of his Majesty's liege subjects, he leads some portion of the paper, and his pocket leads him. He is dry, dull, and melancholy, when poor, anticipates all sorts of gloomy events to the nation, and becomes almost lachrymose. Let him get a fresh supply, and he is another man. He is lively and gay, affects wit, and asserts the prosperity of the kingdom, the triumph of universal liberty : his circumstances are an intermittent fever ; when they are positively good, the cold fit leaves him, and he is in a glow.

The two daughters of the worthy couple of whom we spake just now would, if the vagrant-laws had been duly administered in our town, have been sent to the tread-mill long ago. They are the most determined mendicants that ever were seen. The youngest of them, that pretty little piece of formality that you see sitting on the back seat of the carriage as demurely as if she were now at a funeral — that young lady has a scrap-book. The eldest, that tall young woman sitting by her side,

whose face is full of glee, enjoying everything she sees and cannot see, and laughing all over, even her very nose laughs—that young lady has an album. These books are the pests of all they know, and not only of *these persons*, but *their* acquaintance also. They not only ask you to write verses and draw flowers, but tease you to ask your friends to do the same—they will be “so *much* obliged!” The one turns up her sober little face with so quiet an air of persuasion, and looks so primly innocent; and the other laughs you into it with so much hearty good-humour, that you cannot refuse them. You consent, and they are delighted: the one all mad rapture and joyous exclamation, the other as cosily happy as a hen when she views her only chick pecking at the grains she has found for it.

There is the good old lady, the mother of our curate, the Lady Bountiful of our town. She is a worthy creature, but truly she is a great bore. She has always some subscription for you to put your name to, and if you have five shillings in your pocket, she is never satisfied

till she has decoyed it from you. All sorts of pretences are at her tongue's end. A poor man has tumbled out of a walnut-tree while gathering the nuts; he has broken his leg, dislocated his collar-bone, fractured his skull, and demolished three or four of his ribs. He is gone to the hospital, and has left a young wife with a large family of small children, all very hungry, and they have no bread. Some old woman's pig has been pounded for straying "with intent to steal" into her neighbour's pea-field. Another old lady has lost all her fowls by the "pip." Somebody's cow has lost her calf. Another old lady's roof lets in the water, and must be newly thatched. There is no end to her grievances, for she makes all the grievances of other people her own. She is very modest, and will never put her own name on the list till the other charitable folks have subscribed. It is said she sometimes forgets it altogether, but of that we are not certain.

The celebrated Quin, when he had advised a needy man to have a subscription raised for him, was applied to by the interested

party, who wished to know what the actor would *give*. "Give!" replied the wit—"didn't I give you the *hint*? Whether our Lady Bountiful, who certainly has the merit of promoting such affairs, thinks she does enough by "giving the hint," this deponent sayeth not.

The old lady is going to the cricket-match, accompanied by her son, his huge wife, and her grandsons and daughters, in their phaeton and one. That unhappy pony! Oh! that we had a branch "society for the suppression of cruelty to animals!" A man and his wife, *two*—his mother, *three*—five children, *eight*—a servant, *nine*—all drawn by a pony under twelve hands. This is being *genteel*, as the curate's wife has it, with a vengeance! The old lady and her son have got out to walk up the hill, the children and their pompous mamma sit still. To wear out the oldest first is good economy.

There is the little doctor, too, mincing his way over the rough stones and gravelly mud very carefully, for he hath donned a new pair of kerseymeres this auspicious morning, and his wife, who walks beside him, will not have



them splashed. Ah! there goes his foot into a puddle—"squish," as the people here expressively say on such occasions; and hark! his lady is "giving tongue," for he has not only splashed his own person, but has quite spoiled her black silk dress and white cotton stockings. "Heavens! James, how can you be so stupid? you are always gaping about so! I *knew* how it would be—there are those *nice* new trowsers covered with mud, and my dress into the bargain! One might as well walk with a pig, I declare!"

"My dear, I couldn't help it."

"Couldn't help it, indeed!—you didn't try to help it. See what a figure you have made me! I never will put on anything good to go out with you again. Get along do, and don't stand there staring!"

Poor little doctor, he may well stare! But on they go, intent only upon the cricket-match, and regardless of the coming shower. That black silk dress will be daubed yet more, or I am mistaken.

You and I, reader, will draw nearer the

town. By the time we get there, the rain will be on the descent. It will be a "pelter," as we call it here, and many of our fair ones will rue their excursion. Here we are at the Crown Inn once more, and here, sure enough, is the shower pouring down with delightful energy. The clouds are completely surcharged—what a ducking they will have!

Now they come. First the old gentleman in his phaeton; he drives along in gallant style, clears the angle of the inn like a mail-coachman, and away he goes, shaking his fat sides and jolly cheeks with laughter at the vexation of his wife and daughters, who "do not like to have their veils spoiled." Then comes the phaeton and one, having all the family drenched, and with the addition of the attorney's saucy little minx of a daughter crammed in to make up the *tenth* passenger, who sits up amidst the group of children as if she intended to convey to all who see her that she "doesn't care a fig for being wet through." Nor does she.

Next we have the Bishop of Burleigh in his lumbering gig, and, notwithstanding the flog-

gings of the gentleman and the abuse of the lady, the old clumsy horse will not move beyond the rate of four miles and a half per hour. The bishop's lady is regularly sopped. Her lavender silk pelisse is "done for," and the flowers and feathers that adorn her bonnet, intermixed with ribbon and other finery, are all matted together, like the tails of the few miserable fowls that are huddled up in the corner of this gateway. The lady looks very bitterly on the occasion. That horse will be a lucky fellow if he gets any oats for his supper to-night; when one of the fair sex is inclined to be revenged, let her alone to discover the means.

. Now for the pedestrians — here they are, as pretty a crowd of unfortunates as ever was seen. The little doctor with his new kerseymeres tucked up nearly to the knees, his shoes filled with water, and his stockings covered with slimy mud, and his "best hat" covered with his pocket-handkerchief. His good lady has a great affection for her bonnet, and has thrown the skirt of her dress over her head, disclosing a white petticoat, bemired and wet

through, that covers as substantial a person as ever was owned by woman. It clings to her legs, and impedes her progress, for the wind is against her, and at every step the water oozes out from the sides of her shoes, but on she goes, holding fast the elevated petticoat, and easing herself of a weight of spleen by venting it on her husband.

The "dear injured girls" are as badly off, worse — see the poetess has lost her shoe, that has been left in the stiff, black mud, at the bottom of the hill, near the turnpike. The long major has fastened his "belcher" about his neck, and has contrived to make the collar of his coat stand back in such a manner as to receive all the droppings from his hat, which does not seem to be water-proof, down his back. "He will have a smart fit of indigestion for this, depend upon it." So says his sister to the attorney, who looks like a drowned rat, and does not care if the major never digests another mouthful. There we have them all, pretty nearly the whole town, all

wet, dirty, cold, and comfortless. Let us leave them to enjoy themselves.

There is nothing so provoking as being kept at a door — knock, knock, knocking, and pulling the bell till your fingers ache, without making anybody hear ; or, what is more likely, without making them *heed*. There are the poor little doctor and his wife, still out in the rain, for the servant has not yet let them in. Ten to one she is talking to the butcher's man, and has got him in the kitchen over a jug of her mistress's brewing. The lady is quite impatient. She has tried to open the "surgery" door to no purpose, and is now practising a *dos-a-dos* movement that will soon settle the affair. The weight alone must do it — bang, bang, bang, there it is ! — a glorious triumph of nature over art.

### “ THE ABBEY.”

UPON the outskirts of “ our town,” there stands, as we before said, a plain-looking, unostentatious sort of habitation, which is built, or said to be built, on the site of the abode of some dignitary of the church, who was centuries ago made worm’s-meat. From its situation near “ the ruins” the building takes its name, or what amounts to the same thing, the vanity of the man who built it induced him to give it such a very undeserved title. The external appearance is mean. It is a comfortable residence for all that, and, since it has been under the control of its present proprietor, it is distinguished for an air of snugness and comfort, combined with neatness and cleanliness.

The form of the building is, heaven knows what. Originally it might have been an oblong square erection, of one story, besides the ground-floor ; but this is a question which requires much patient research to be determined. So many after-thoughts have sprung up in the shape of “ bed-rooms, smoking-rooms, servants’ rooms, kitchens,” and “ outhouses” of every description, that it now resembles a will which, having been made time enough before the testator died to allow many changes of his mind, is so overburthened with codicils, that the first intention is quite destroyed.

The first intention of “ the abbey” builder was probably that of erecting a comfortable dwelling for a man who could spend not more than two hundred a year in it—a retired major in the army, perhaps, whose wife might have a small annuity, or some such personage ; but subsequent enlargements have made it equal to hold a numerous family and five or six servants, and capable of allowing the expenditure of some sixteen or eighteen hundred a-year within its walls.

There it stands, you see, reader, just removed from the narrow lane, which people here, with their usual courtesy for all that belongs to "our town," call a road. The stables are so placed that they may be said to constitute the entrance lodge. The newly-painted gate of neat construction swings easily, as we push it, on its well-oiled hinges, and admits us to a well-rolled red gravel path, that contrasts prettily with the green verdure of the oft-mowed turf, which comprises that frequent scene of mirth and conviviality—the "bowling-green."

There you see two grotesque figures, about three feet six inches high, placed on brick pedestals, crowned with flat stone, which people here call "Harlequin and Columbine." The former is in the motley garb of his progenitors, wears a black mask partly over his face, and has something like a rusty drab cocked-hat on his head, which hangs very lackadaisically over his left shoulder. One arm is turned fantastically over his head, and the hand of the other is about to draw his wand from his belt. He is standing, perhaps from economical mo-



tives, on one foot at a time, and with the other he is trying to cut a caper. Upon the whole he exhibits as much agility as a superannuated elephant. His figure is squat, as large at the waist as anywhere else, and his ankles appear symptomatic of dropsy.

"Columbine" is a stupid-looking, vulgar sort of damsel, whose legs might be supposed to be inverted from the size of that part of them which is made visible below her drapery. Her shoulders are square, her waist thick, her elbows large and red, her nose redder than her elbows. Her hands are such as no man would like to have come in contact with his face; one is set upon her right hip, "a kimbo," the other seems to be beckoning to somebody. "Harlequin" is on the wrong side, too busy with his own graces to mind her; and perhaps she is playing him false. Her eyes have a very insinuating leer, and her petticoats, although partly turned up through her pocket holes, are clearly longing to get be-draggled in the mud. She is, in short, a most vulgar specimen of the "fair seck," as Mary

Flagon has it, and if they had only furnished her with a bottle and glass, she might have served for Miss Mary's representative.

The bowling-green is bounded on the north side by the hedge that separates it from the lane,— I should have said the “Burleigh road;” on the south by the orchard; on the east by the ruin, which has been noticed; on the west by the flowery parterre before the house, which shows its white-washed front, and its numerous angles and gables amidst a collection of trees, some ever-green, some never green. Round about are piggeries, which we will say more about in their place, cow-sheds, poultry-pens, invisible fences and fences that everybody may see; and at the back of all is a very fine and spacious kitchen-garden in the best order.

Where is the old gentleman? One of two things he is sure to be doing if he is out-of-doors, *i. e.* smoking his pipe, or playing at bowls;—and there he is, sure enough, doing both at once. There, my dear reader, you behold a happy man, and what is more a man who really

deserves to be happy. He is spending the evening of his life in the enjoyment of independent age, after having toiled laboriously and honestly through life's long day, and having to contend with the arduous difficulty of establishing a numerous family. Every shilling that that man possesses has been truly gained by the “sweat of his brow,” by which he has arrived at an honourable competency and lives to enjoy it. He has steered his vessel safe through the shoals and quicksands of life, and is now happily moored at the haven of all his wishes, to gain which how much of toil, and care, and anxiety must he have endured.

His days are passed in harmless and innocent enjoyments. It may be said there are things of far greater consequence than driving a bowl against a “jack,” and so there are, it cannot be denied. There are many things, too, that make more noise in the world, and are productive of much the same good, and more harm; of which some people think passing a “Reform Bill” is an instance. The game of bowls is not to be altogether laughed at nevertheless.

The gentleman who loses his forty thousand at a throw of the dice, would show his teeth, and curl his aristocratic lip at so humble a game, it is likely, but his contempt would be misplaced. Besides being humble, it would be laborious, and that would not suit him. It would make his back ache. His arm would be stiff for a week, and he could not endure the fatigue of walking backwards and forwards. But if he could bear these little inconveniences, he would gain a wholesome exercise, which is all Mr. Thryvewell aims at, and his recreation might not be the means of reducing himself to the alternative of a pistol, or "Banco Regis." While running his gay career, he would sneer at these advantages; but, when he arrives at a course of blue-pill and poverty, the odds are at least a thousand to one, he wishes he had given the preference to "bowls."

Be this as it may, Mr. Thryvewell enjoys his game. He finds it a healthful exercise of the body, and a pleasant relaxation for the mind. He has taken to playing bowls, and grows young. It was a wise plan. If he had

not adopted it, he might have become bilious, and fancied himself the most injured of elderly gentlemen. He might have had fits of the spleen, become disgusted with the world, and, like Miss Bays, our poetess, turned up his nose at it. He might have fancied that his daughters were full of intrigue, and that his sons wished him dead for the sake of his money. He might have anticipated domestic treason, and suspected there was poison in every cup he put to his lips, till he ended the whole by plunging into his own muddy duck-pond, unless a friendly fit of apoplexy had prevented such a foul necessity. As it is, he escapes bile, is content to take the world as he finds it, has no objection to his daughters, and believes his sons dutiful. And, so far from suspecting his cup, few people enjoy one more. Let no man laugh at bowls.

“ Care may mount behind the horseman and stick to his skirts,” as somebody has said ; but let the rider tie his steed to Mr. Thryvewell’s gate, and enter his bowling-green with the spirit of a player, and he will find the tail of his coat as free from the grasp of care as Mr.

Hume's speeches are of wit. Look at that hearty old man. Is there any care in his face? Pish! he has thrown care to the winds! He is a good and an honest player; he does his best, and tells you what he is about to do. There is the "jack"—he will be "into" it if he can. You may bet upon him safely. When Mr. Brougham was bowling at the woolsack, he professed to be playing wide, and all who knew him not were taken in. Mr. Thryvewell wins and receives his sixpence with as much satisfaction as Mr. Brougham had when he took his title. The king, "God bless him!" is not a greater man in his own court than is Mr. Thryvewell in his bowling-green; nor was Lord Grey a whit happier when he superseded the Duke of Wellington.

However, Mr. Thryvewell's play, like Lord Althorp's arithmetic, is sometimes erroneous. Like the editor of the *Globe*, he is sometimes mincing in his style, and falls short of the mark; again, he drives on, like Cobbett, at everybody in the game, determined to displace all, and get the "jack" himself. On such oc-

casions he loses, but he does so with infinite good-humour, and pays his money with the same cheerfulness as John Gully, Esq. M. P. evinces when he is on the wrong side.

We will give a brief sketch of his career. The materials, if duly spun out, might serve a biographer as an excuse for inflicting upon the public two goodly octavo volumes;—much less will serve our purpose. When any unfortunate man’s life is written now-a-days, it is so overdone with the prolix observations and reflections of the editor, that the life itself is in pretty much the same situation as an infant overlaid by an unwieldy nurse—it is smothered. An outline shall here be given which may serve any gentleman of the trade who may wish to oblige the reading-public with a proof of his talents, and it is hoped he will not fail to acknowledge it, as in duty bound.

THE LIFE OF RICHARD THRYVEWELL, ESQ.

*Two volumes, octavo.*

At a time when the press is so productive—  
it is hoped—enlightened reader—any subject—

universal approbation—this memoir—encouragement—subject very singular—honest man.

Editor regrets—unequal talents—public liberality—criticism disarmed.

Authentic documents — parish register fixes birth—respectable family—domestic bereavements—pecuniary misfortunes—national school — not remarkable for quick parts—apprenticed — journeyman-baker — great industry — strict integrity—master's confidence.

Person well-looking—influence of Cupid—master's daughter—love at first sight—clandestine marriage — unforgiving parents — poverty—lasting affection—increasing family — great frugality—connubial joy—enters business—pledges of love—bankruptcy. End of Vol. I.

Vol. II. Honesty proved — friendship — aid—again in business—success—other pledges of love—domestic happiness—past debts paid — world's applause—more pledges of love—competency—retires from business—establishes sons—country residence—rural enjoyments—evening of life—sons thriving — daughters marriageable.



Pleasing duty of biographer—domestic taste—great virtue—esteem—numerous friends—hospitality—charitable disposition—friend to the poor.

Sincere christian—quite resigned—melancholy duty of editor—last sad scene—great loss—afflicted family—circle of friends—family vault—“ *hic jacet*”—honest man.

Finis.

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Let any reader say if he cannot fill up the intervals, and arrive at the conclusion, as happily from this outline as from some eight or nine hundred pages of adulatory memoir. If he cannot, he is to be pitied.

I have carried Mr. Thryvewell's life beyond the present, and have dipped into the future somewhat further than he would like to do. But it is easy to see the close of the scene, though it may be, as I hope it is, far in perspective. The usual course of his calm fragment of existence may be interrupted, perhaps, by a fit of the gout, or some of the other “ills that flesh is heir to;” but he will bear them

with the usual philosophy of gouty subjects, and as soon as his toes are out of flannel, ten to one they are in the bowling-green. He will maintain his hospitality to the last, and by the exercise of kindness to his friends, affection to his family, and charity to his poorer brethren, he will fit himself for the end to which all must come. And when he is gone, it will be acknowledged that he *was*, to use the words of his own favourite song, " a hearty good fellow."

To return from melancholy anticipations, we will direct our attention to the inside of his abode. It is in character with its proprietor. Solid, substantial, plain, and void of gew-gaws, and knick-knackery. The tables are of the old school, few of the modern apologies for these useful articles would stand beneath the loads they have to bear. The Thryvewells are a numerous race. His sons have married for the most part early in life, and to their own cousins, and they all have wives celebrated for their anti-Malthusian propensities. What with wedding days, birth days, and christenings, they are pretty well engaged in parties and

feastings. These events are celebrated chiefly, I believe, at “the abbey,” and thus it is the scene of continued festivity.

Christmas brings the whole family together, great and small, young and old—and then what a hubbub is there. There certainly must be great ingenuity exercised in stowing so large an assemblage in so small a space. Children and grand-children, daughters-in-law, and so forth, they muster seventy or eighty—allowing for the unavoidable absence of some who may be in “delicate situations,” or the young ones who are ill.

The commiseration of this worthy old man and his wife is constantly excited in so multitudinous a family. This lady is “confined”—that lady expects to be, and is very poorly; another lady has sundry qualms, and sensations, and pains, and is as she “never felt herself before,” and “cannot tell what ails her,” till the old lady takes a ride over, and explains all to her satisfaction. Then the “teething,” and the horrors of small-pox, vaccination, measles, hooping-cough, and scarlet-fever—

to say nothing of the thousand and one stomach complaints, add every year to their anxieties.

But all are borne with great equanimity by the old gentleman. He sends wine to one, a doctor to another, his wife sends a nurse to a third, and they "drive over" to see a fourth; so that the business of his present life is to assuage the evils of humanity, and this done, he returns to the bowling-green, satisfied that he has performed all that duty and affectionate solicitude require, and amuses himself till somebody else becomes ill.

Upon the old lady, all these trials have a somewhat different effect. She becomes restless, fidgety, and sometimes querulous. There is not enough done, or there has been too much done. "Master George's powders were too strong," or they were "too weak," or "too nasty for the poor child to take." Then Dr. Slaimour comes in for a share of her verbal notice. "He is a stupid old man, and knows nothing about it. Why don't doctors make physic pleasant? It is enough to be ill, without having to swallow messes that would turn the stomach of a horse."

The doctor bears all with great composure—the Thryvewells are good patients. His eyes twinkle a little faster than usual while the storm rages, but at length the old lady has done, though she is long about it, and then he soothes and conciliates, makes a timely compliment to the lady’s handiness and sagacity, and she smiles. He tells a joke, repeats a little gossip, and she is pleased outright. Then he departs, and Mrs. Thryvewell says, “ he is a very clever man after all.”

The storm occasionally is vented on her spouse. Not that she does not revere him above all things on earth ; but when a lady is out of temper, first come first served ; and as the daughters generally contrive to mount their ponies at such times, the old gentleman has to bear the brunt of the attack. He takes refuge in a cloud of smoke, and maintains a grave and dignified silence. Experience has taught him that when a lady is wound up, the best plan is to let her run down. There is a certain length of chain to go out, and to stop the machine is only to protract the misery,

which will come at last. Therefore he smokes whilst she scolds. Ever and anon, the curling wreaths escape from his lips faster than ordinary, and he now and then catches up his foot with a little quickness, as if the gout nipped it; but in no other way is the effect of her orations manifested. Two or three pipes, and a second jug of strong beer, bring him to the end. He goes to the bowling-green, and works off the effects of his pent humour by a most industrious continuation of the game.

By the way, people have in general a curious idea of industry and idleness. They seem to have made up their minds that any and every employment that does not produce an adequate return in hard money is an idle one. It may be so for aught that I know, but there are many people of my acquaintance, who work very hard at such employments nevertheless. There is the little doctor for instance, who will walk ten hours at a stretch, behind the tail of his dog, with fourteen or fifteen pounds of gun upon his shoulder, or who will industriously flog—whip "the wise it call"—every inch of

the three miles of stream, between “ our town,” and Burleigh, with all the patient energy of a donky-driver, and yet he is universally termed an idle man. There is Lieutenant Snarl, the chemist, who will walk twenty miles a-day to retail with glee a piece of news or scandal, and he is called an idle man.

Again, there is Miss Shooter, the attorney’s daughter, who will walk five miles on a hot summer’s day to a cricket-match ; work twenty successive hours to get ready a new dress for a birth-night or a ball, and dance some fifteen or sixteen miles of quadrilles afterwards ; and everybody agrees that she is the most idle girl they ever knew. There is a gentleman, too, in “ our town,” who will stand upon one leg from morn till night, and turn a lathe with the other, while both hands are occupied in spoiling wood with as much industry and eagerness as Lord Palmerston manifested in “ hammering out protocols ;” yet the former is set down as an idle fellow, and the latter as an industrious nobleman.

There is something erroneous in this esti-

mation of character. The importance of the object on which a man is employed does not determine his industry ; and it would not be the worse if some people could condescend to employ themselves upon trifles occasionally.

Would not the arch-agitator O'Connell, with his tail and their supporters in the House, be as profitably, and less injuriously, employed in spitting over a bridge, like our doctor and chemist, as they are in agitating the Repeal of the Union? Or might not Messrs. Hume and Cobbett be just as well engaged in a friendly game of "cat's cradle," as to be baying the Commons with long speeches that nobody listens to? However, that is their business, not our's.

Digressions are like bad roads, it is more easy to get into than out of them. But we have now turned back, and are arrived at the spot from whence we started.

There is a wide difference between thought and action. The man who is a deep thinker hates action ; he who has been accustomed to a life of the latter, is apt to despise thought, or,



as such a man would himself say, to “ drown it.” Of the latter class is the worthy old man who is the subject of the present theme. He was early put by necessity into the go-cart of business. All that is requisite for a man to do in such a situation is to plod and work hard ; he need not be a whit wiser than his neighbours, and, if he is, the best thing he can do is to hide it from them. If he have a flash of wit belonging to him, if he think or read on the matter of his business, he is settled. Let him show himself superior in attainments to those by whom he is surrounded, and they cut him. If he think or read, he is likely to become speculative, and will prove a theorist where only a practician can succeed. Mr. Cobbett would have been an excellent farmer, if he had never read somebody’s notions on turnip-sowing ; but he did so and experimentalised, and everybody knows the end of it.

Supposing any man who had a particular notion in his head is right in it, what then ? Why, if he oppose himself to custom, everybody will be opposed to him. The public

cannot exactly say that he is not *right*, but they think it very imprudent in him to suppose *they* are *wrong*. But if he plod on in the usual way, with a due deference to the customs and opinions of those about him, they will aid him with their advice and co-operation. They will set him down as modest and unassuming, and are willing to lend him a helping hand. If he fail, they acknowledge that he “ did the best he could,” because they had a hand in it, and they refuse not their sympathy. But who sympathised with Mr. Cobbett when he failed? —not one of the numerous farmers from whose ways he had pragmatically, as they thought, departed.

Mr. Thryvewell was just the sort of man for business. He wanted not industry, but he lacked imagination. He had what may be termed a genius for business, which is probably saying that he had a genius for nothing else. However, there is a difference between the fair and liberal dealer and the cringing, obsequious shopkeeper. The latter Mr. Thryvewell could never become. It is not in him. He is too

much of the “ real John Bull ” for that. His goods were what they ought to be — his prices fair and compensating. “ Take ’em or leave ’em.” He kept the shop, or rather the general *depôt*, which we have endeavoured to describe at the commencement of these sketches. It was he who raised it to its present dignity ; in it he made his fortune — from it he retired respectably ; and when he relinquished it to his sons, its present proprietors, it was with the character of an honest man. At least he was so held in the estimation of those whose estimation was worth caring for.

There are some who insinuated, and still insinuate, that unfair means were resorted to, but of that there is not the shadow of proof. The competency he has gained is shared liberally ; he is hospitable in the extreme to his acquaintance, and the wants of the poor are not disregarded. He has fulfilled the duties of a husband, a father, a friend, and a neighbour, with credit to himself ; and yet the envious, harmless and inoffensive as he is, cavil at him. Even Captain Stock and Lieutenant Snarl,

who are the constant sharers of his kindness, and others who are almost equally so, carp at him, and sneer when they have turned their backs upon the hand that has fed them. The little doctor, who is a pretty constant partaker of the festivities at "the abbey," will talk of the "sacrifice of his professional dignity," which he makes by associating with one who was formerly "a baker."

There is a consolation, however, in reflecting that the worst they can say of him is, that he "was a journeyman baker;" and this, be it remembered, is said by those who, if *they* had been journeymen bakers, would have been so *still*.

## CLEVER MEN, AND CLEVER WOMEN.

“By gar de herring is not so dead as me vill make him.  
I vill tell you how I vill kill him.”

*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

A SKETCH has already been given of the gentleman who recently figured, in the unsophisticated language of the folks of “our town,” as the “*head* doctor.” He of whom we are now about to speak is of a different stamp. Whether as an apothecary, or as a man, he is “another-guess sort of thing” entirely.

Some seven or eight years since, this disciple of Galen, who had just finished the rounds of a London Hospital, and who fancied himself, therefore, qualified to practise his “arts,” and “mysteries,” upon such unfortunate wretches

as might submit their persons to his skill, entered the circle of "our town," under the following circumstances. A surgeon in the navy, who had endeavoured vainly to establish a business therein, advertised his "practice," household furniture, and a broken-winded pony for sale. The particulars were set forth glowingly, they caught the eye of the newly licensed hero of this sketch, and he, accompanied by an elderly aunt, and a stout, strapping young woman, who was to be his spouse, took a view of the premises. They inspected the books, which contained names of patients who never existed, and others who never employed the owner, asked the premium, bated a few pounds, to show they could "make a clever bargain," and purchased the whole concern.

An introduction was to be given by the seller to his patients. It was very artfully managed. To those who had employed him, he took the tyro, and hoped they would continue their support to his successor. Those who lived only in his "ledger," he said, were in London on business, or at watering-places on pleasure.

To those who had never employed him he took care to go when they were out or engaged, and to all he declared, when his victim was not present, that the in-coming practitioner was "too much of a coxcomb ever to succeed in anything, but that the medical profession was the last he should have adopted — he was only fit for a barber."

Some "damned good-natured friend" took care that their sly whisperings should be conveyed to the victim, *after* the purchase had been *long* completed. The poor little man was highly indignant, as became him on such an occasion; he vowed vengeance; "if ever the naval surgeon came to "our town" again, he would have satisfaction; he would show him what it was to call a gentleman a coxcomb; he would call him out, and one or both should — &c.

All this was said to his friends, and, as they generally heard it over a good dinner, they applauded his courage, proclaimed him a "man of spirit," thought it a pity that he should risk his valuable life in a duel, but admitted that on such an occasion he could not, with his

nice feelings of honour and his determined character, do otherwise. His wife, for he was at this time yoked to his present helpmate, sighed and shed tears, vowed that her "dear James" should not endanger himself, hung about his neck, besought him to promise her that he would not fight, and when he refused to promise, for refuse he most magnanimously did, she very properly made a faint, and was not restored until sundry pieces of linen had been consumed under her nostrils.

The "*little doctor*," for so he is generally termed, lived upon his reputation, and seemed to gain an inch or two in height upon the strength of it. He carried his head upright, as if to assume a military and warlike appearance; gave three shillings for an old pistol, and practised assiduously at firing at a mark. Dreadful work was anticipated by his friends, and above all by his wife. The lady lost two stone of her "solid flesh." She was anxious by day and sleepless at night. Every report of the old pistol seemed to ring the knell of her hero, and often did she start from a "horrid



dream," and clasp the little man tightly round his neck in frightful alarm, until he was half-choked. Then devoutly thanking Heaven that he was still safe, she would recline her throbbing temples on his gallant bosom, and yield herself to "nature's sweet restorer — balmy sleep."

Meantime, the doctor cultivated his whiskers, and tried to look fierce. It was observed that he swore more than usual, and whenever the naval surgeon's name was mentioned, he placed both his hands in the pockets of his unmentionables, and with defiance in his eyes, and resolution in his swelling breast, would exclaim, "D—— me, let him show his face here, I'll——" but he was generally checked by his wife, who would observe, "My dearest James, for God's sake don't be *rash*! what *should* I do if you were lost to me?"

Then James would offer consolation, kiss away her falling tears, press her hand, and look unutterable things; but, to do him justice, he never once changed his intrepid bearing. To wife and friends he always maintained his stern

resolution, and when the good lady, or his intimates were particularly solicitous, he talked of "honour." "What was a man without it," &c. &c.

Dire were the anticipations of all who knew him. Sundry were the speculations as to who the young widow would marry if he fell, and who would take the "practice." Soon, fatally soon, was it bruited about that the naval surgeon intended to pay his first half-yearly visit for his rent, as the house was his own property. Mrs. Assington was in dreadful fits, the good folks were in dreadful alarm, the dress-makers of "our town," in hope. Mourning the widow must have. Each fair sempstress sent a card to the doctor's wife, and trusted to be favoured with her "future commands." Topas the undertaker looked upon a job as certain; "one or both," the doctor had said, and Topas cared not which.

The naval surgeon arrived. The doctor's wife insisted upon being present at the interview, that she might, if possible, "prevent James from being rash." The surgeon de-

manded his rent; it was paid, and the receipt given. The landlord was about to depart — poor man! he knew not what was to happen. The little doctor placed his hands into his breeches pockets, and stood — not quite upright. “Stop, Mr. —,” said he. The landlord stopped. The doctor’s wife looked imploringly at her husband — but on he went.

“Sir,” said he, “Sir — I am told — that you — have called — me, in my absence, a — coxcomb — and I wish, Sir, to know if it be true?”

“True enough,” was the reply.

“Then, Sir,” —

“For God’s sake don’t be rash,” cried the doctor’s wife; “consider *me*, James.”

James went on regardless of his wife’s agony.

“Then, Sir, I demand an apology. Will you give it?”

“I’ll see you d——d first.”

The doctor’s wife fainted. The doctor was puzzled.

“Oh! very well, very well,” said he.

"I'm glad it is so," replied the landlord ;  
"have you anything more to say ?"

"Oh ! nothing, Sir."

"So much the better ; good morning."

The landlord departed, he still calls every half-year for his rent, and receives it. The fears of the doctor's wife and his friends have long since subsided.

We have already seen the mode adopted by our steady old practitioner, Doctor Slaimour ; that which was pursued by the "*little doctor*" was somewhat different. In our brief sketch of the veteran, we have shown that by a steady adherence to business, and thorough neglect of everything that could take him out of it, he succeeded in making a handsome competency. He entered "our town" without a shilling, and is now *one* of the richest men, if not *the* richest, in it. Pleasure was to him a secondary consideration until business was done with. When he had ceased to physic, he took to sporting ; sport he must, it would appear, with the lives of something or other ; but never did

the old gentleman scatter an ounce of shot until he had forsaken the shop.

Our "little doctor" is the very reverse. In his code, pleasure stands first, business last. He began just where the "head surgeon" left off. He may almost be said to have entered "our town" gun in hand. For the gun and the fishing-rod he has a strong affection, and he loves to escape the smell of his vile little shop, and the viler potions it contains, to skip over hedge and ditch from morn to night, when he returns with a brace of partridges, and perhaps a rabbit, or a hare that he has taken a liberty with behind its back as it was sitting, or a pheasant that he has surprised in a tree, and for the remainder of the evening flatters himself into the belief that he is a sportsman.

Or he will creep down the side of the narrow stream that runs from the mill with the activity and grimace of a French dancing-master, to drop a fly into a hole where he expects to find a trout; and after going up and down the stream, across, and sometimes *in* it, he returns

with four or five "brace of trout," as *he* terms them. But he is mistaken. They would have been trout if they had lived long enough. He is a chicken-butcher, he kidnaps the infants of tenderest age, cuts them off in the midst of their childish gaiety and innocent gambols, takes advantage of their inexperience to seduce them from their parents by a thing of painted hair, which he calls a fly, and ruthlessly consigns the decoyed babies to his frying-pan. Barbarous wretch! He and his wife gloat over their savoury odour as they are laid upon the table for supper, and pick the bones of each with the same horrible zest that a New Zealander would pick the fingers of a new-born child.

In consequence of the "little doctor's" proneness to amusements, or, as he designates it, his "passion for sporting," the slender "practice" which he so dearly purchased has dwindled to a mere nothing. His medicines spoil in his shop. His tinctures evaporate, and his powders become inefficient. People will not entrust their health to one who is always sport-

ing. His piscatorial and other fancies take him so frequently from home, that he can never be found. He lost one of his best patients because he was by the side of the "purling stream" in search of "the finny prey," when a nervous old lady had a racking toothache, that "hell of all diseases," as Burns has aptly termed it; and she was not patient enough to wait more than ten hours ere he could be found to draw the decayed member.

Another fair lady, whose case was one of those delicate matters which usually occur in the night, sent for him at day-break in the month of September, but the little doctor had started a quarter of an hour ere the messenger arrived, on a distant shooting-excursion. The lady waited as long as nature would suffer delay, but no doctor came. An old woman in the neighbourhood did the needful, and when at length the doctor did come, with his gaiters covered with mud, for he had been sporting in low marshy ground, the lady was disturbed from a sound slumber, into which she had fallen about sixteen hours after

"all was over." The indignant husband dismissed the tardy "guardian of health," and almost kicked him out of doors.

These "misfortunes," as the "little doctor" mildly terms them, have reduced the gross amount of his professional earnings to about seventy pounds per annum, inclusive of bad debts. His scalpels and bistouries are now devoted to other purposes than those for which they were originally intended. He may be seen cutting peach and currant-trees with them at any time when such operations are necessary. He is his own gardener, and his theory and practice in horticultural affairs is peculiarly his own. The veteran gardener of "our town" has in vain attempted to teach him the advantage of cutting out "old wood," and training "young branches." The little man will have it all his own way, and when the produce falls short of the average of his neighbours' gardens, as it invariably does, he anathematises the "blight," and vows extermination to snails and caterpillars.

Out of doors he is resolved to maintain his



sway, in spite of everybody. In doors he has sagely discovered—what many other married men have found out—that the only way for a man to be master of his own house and live in peace is to resign the entire management of it to his wife. The little doctor “has no vote *in* the house.” There the government is supreme, and vested in the hands of his better half. The lady has long since known that her husband is no hero. He has “neither head nor heart,” as she expresses it. The landlord’s affair probably opened her eyes to his deficiency of the latter, and every day occurrences show her that he is not “capable of managing his own concerns.” Consequently, she has instituted a sort of private “commission of lunacy,” and, having arrived within herself at the conclusion that he is not of “sound mind,” and never has been since his marriage, she has passed a verdict accordingly, and taken upon herself the office of superintending them. The lady settles all accounts, receives and disburses, and keeps the key of the treasury.

Nothing comes into the house but that which

she approves; nothing goes out but that which she dispenses, save physic. For the usual quarter of malt which she brews every six months, and for the doctor's new inexpressibles, "a bill" must be "brought in" and "receive the royal assent," or the "little doctor" is compelled to return them from whence they came. His allowance of powder and shot is restricted to a certain quantity, dependent upon the results of his shooting. He is sometimes made subservient to domestic purposes, particularly in that busy season of the year when active housewives prepare their annual quantity of jellies and preserves. The doctor is then, his wife allows that, a handy fellow.

With one of his lady's aprons tied round him, he may at such times be seen before a huge kitchen-fire, stirring up the contents of a bell-metal skillet, or standing at the broad deal table, busily squeezing the currants and gooseberries into a mass of pulp, which, mixed with a *quantum sufficit* of sugar, constitutes that vile mess called jam. I am not a punster, or I could say something here about *jam satis*. Let that go.

In "our town" the little doctor has the reputation of being a "clever little man." So say the old ladies; but they qualify it by adding, "only he is so boyish, and so ruled by his wife." The lady is universally admitted to be a "clever woman," the most odious animal in nature. The men also consider the doctor to be "decidedly clever," but yet he is never employed. He is too young—too boyish, say the ladies, for a medical man, although they do admit, with the gentlemen, there is something in him. They admit this, be it observed, against their will.

The fact is, the little doctor puzzles our people. He talks to them, at every opportunity, a farrago of dog-Latin and high-sounding technicals, which they do not understand; and, as they cannot for the lives of them contradict him, they are obliged to assent, and therefore pronounce him clever. He astounds them with the wonderful cures he effected and saw in the hospital, runs over every drug in the *materia medica*, its properties, composition, uses, dose, and officinal preparations; gives them specimens

of forms of medicine, descants upon their effects; goes through the pharmacopœias of the three colleges, proves that of London to be the best; talks fluently of operations, gives anecdotal recollections of Abernethy, quotes him in favour of blue pill—and so forth, and so forth.

In short, he hath made himself a walking dictionary of surgery and medicine. Has any one a pain in the eye, he hath a discussion ready about *infra-orbitary* and *supra-orbitary* nerves, their branches and ramifications—their connexion with the brain; proceeds thence to lecture upon every part that branches from the unhappy creature's vertebræ—goes off to the stomach and liver, the biliary ducts and the pancreas—journeys across the transverse arch of the colon, pops upon the duodenum, and enlarges upon the folds of the intestinal canal. Thence he ascends to the lungs, explains the operation of air upon the blood—talks learnedly of oxygen and hydrogen, discolouration of the vital fluid, ruptures of air-cells, and thickening of mucous membranes—clammers up the

*trachea*, descends again by the *œsophagus*—remounts with the blood in its passage from the heart to the brain, which brings him back again to the nerves, and these carrying him through the aperture in the *os frontis*, he comes again to the eye, and that reminds him that he has an excellent remedy for pains in that organ in the shape of eye-water, of which he earnestly recommends the astounded auditor to “try a bottle.” He repeats all this incomprehensible mass of acquirement, as a parrot repeats the sentences it has gained, without connexion or order, and often without meaning. His skill “hath this extent, no more.”

During these exhibitions, the good lady, his wife, is constant in her efforts to retain or to recall the wandering attention of those on whom these narrations are inflicted. Not that she cares a whit about them herself—she is fully aware of their true value; but she knows there are none in “our town” who understand these things, and she has hopes that her husband’s luminous conversations may induce his hearers to think well of his medical talents, and

that it may bring business. Her behaviour on such occasions is the more remarkable, because, whenever the little doctor is speaking on other topics, *her* opinion of his understanding is strongly marked by sundry nods, grīmacēs of the countenance, and ejaculations, which convey, as plainly as language to those who witness them, that she deems him a downright fool, and, to say the truth, she has brought most of her acquaintance to the same opinion. Even the folk of "our town" one, and all, confess "he is a fool in everything but his profession, and for that he is too young."

The first day that I spent with this gentleman has ever since been a marked spot in my existence. He afforded me a variety of information on a variety of subjects, for which I hope I was and am truly grateful. Certainly the little doctor took great pains to enlighten my understanding. He compassionated my ignorance, and resolved to dispel it. For my especial benefit and edification he robbed his cat of her just reward, a rat that she had tormented to death, and dissected the animal on

the top of his low garden-wall, and proceeded to lecture thereupon. In one hour and a-half I learned that the œsophagus was not the windpipe; that rats, though cunning animals, have a very moderate developement of brain, and that not of an intellectual order; and that there was no reason to believe in the vulgar assertion that rats' tails were poisonous.

The lecturer confessed he had never analyzed these appendages, nor did he know that anybody else ever had, but he believed it to be a popular fallacy. I thanked him, as well I might. He then proceeded to explain to me that vaccination and inoculation were not the same thing; and this led him to inform me that Dr. Jenner was a clever man.

The operation of inoculating trees was then revealed to me; grafting and budding followed; then a new method of cutting fruit-trees, which he claimed as his own, and I believe very justly — at least I never heard anybody else lay claim to it. I also learned that frosts were very destructive to the blossoms of fruit-trees, and that high winds often blew the

fruit itself off its branches. Whether these new facts caused me to express some astonishment in my countenance, I do not precisely know, but the doctor actually referred me to a score or two of young apples that were lying underneath the parent tree, adding, with a look of triumph, "There is ocular demonstration!"

We touched on sporting subjects, and I learned the surprising fact, that a man with a *double* gun might be expected to kill *more* game than another with a *single* one; that is, if he could shoot *as well*. I also learned that partridges were frequently to be found in "wheat-ashes" in the morning, and in fallows and pieces of turnips about noon; and that towards night they returned to the stubble again. I was told that Mayflies were good bait for trout, and that this very curious insect lived only a single day.

At dinner I had a treatise on digestion and things that were and were not digestible. At last the cloth was removed, and, like a loyal subject, the little doctor gave "The King." Despite of being lame and stiff, and I was



both, I was obliged to rise and do the doctor's bidding, who was determined that the toast should be drunk standing. I glanced at the lady of the house—she glanced at me; her look plainly expressed, "Did you ever see such a fool?" We talked of wine. The doctor said "he did not believe that all the wine that was called port came from Oporto, though his own did; but he always gave a good figure—never less than forty-five shillings. Some people gave more, but he knew how to go to work; and," he added, with a very grave and dignified look, "a penny saved is two pence gained, you know." I assented with reverence to the sage observation, which led the doctor to speak of Dr. Franklin, and he said the doctor was a clever man. This brought on a discussion of literature. Lord Byron and poetry, novels and Sir Walter Scott, each had their turn. The gentleman liked his lordship; the lady did not—"he was a bad husband," she said, "and she abhorred bad husbands." The little doctor looked pleased, and, as it is termed, fished for a compliment. The lady called him a "silly

man," and said something about husbands that were good and those that were good for nothing.

Thence we proceeded to the politics of the day. I ascertained that it was the decided opinion of my host that the then prime-minister, the Duke of Wellington, was not the man *he* would have chosen for such an office. I also learned that the Catholics stood a chance of being emancipated, and that *à priori*, which he pronounced a *priora*, meant beforehand. Having adjourned our debate over wine, it was resumed over coffee. Mrs. A. asked her husband whether he preferred tea; to which he replied, with as much of gravity and solemnity as if he had been about to pronounce the fate of Europe, that he should "certainly say he preferred the latter."

At the dinner-table every proper woman will not be very talkative; at the tea-table she will of course do as she pleases. It is her empire—there she is privileged, and can say no wrong. Everybody and everybody's affairs are there to be discussed; and this lady, with a degree of

neighbourly kindness that does her infinite credit, managed everybody's affairs but her own, and these she was obliged to neglect for the good of the community.

But, to do her justice, there were many houses worse regulated, for she was shrewd, attentive, and industrious; but she could not be content with an inglorious sway over her own establishment alone—she could not live to see other people's matters going wrong, it made her unhappy; and if they went on differently to her own, wrong they must be—nothing was right but that which she did herself. “For Rome I live, not for myself,” said Brutus; and for “our town,” and a wide circuit round it, did the doctor's wife live.

It was now her turn to shine. By the exercise of great forbearance, she had allowed her husband to say his say at dinner. That was all the “silly man” could expect. At tea he was silent. Verily she had the gift of speech! I learned how many children had been born lawfully and unlawfully; how many new dresses had been bought, and by whom; how many

men had been tipsy, how many women had been cross; and all the marriages, *faux-pas*, and deaths, that had occurred within the term of her residence in "our town." Somebody's cat had had an amatory fit, and was lost; somebody's pig had been pounded; somebody's dog had made a good point. Deliver me from such another scene!

At length I took my departure. The little doctor squeezed my hand, and pressed my speedy renewal of the visit, and he was ably seconded by his wife, for I had been a patient listener, and had gained their good will by my enduring qualities. As he was attending me to the door, I was puzzled by hearing him exclaim, "Veil! veil!" I looked again and again, but could not comprehend. At first I imagined he was reminding me of the custom of giving "vails" to servants, and accordingly put my hand in my pocket. But I was mistaken, and the doctor, with his usual desire to impart knowledge, explained to me that "vail" meant "farewell"—it was only his peculiar pronunciation of the Latin word "vale." I

returned home impressed with the liveliest gratitude for the information I had that day received.

The doctor's wife is one of the prolific matrons of this place, which seems to have something in its very air that gives fecundity to its inhabitants. Were it not for the kind consideration of a typhus-fever that pays us a visit once or twice a-year, and a few lucky casualties, we should be obliged to promote emigration on a large scale. Somefew are, indeed, compelled to emigrate much against their will; but the wisdom that prevails at the assizes at —— has a will of its own, and occasionally thins our redundant population. About twice a-year some of our respectable friends submit to “the powers that be,” and travel for the good of their country.

To return. The doctor's lady is as perfect an anti-Malthusian as any of our ladies, and hath done as much as the best to increase our numbers. About every fifteenth month (I allow the utmost stretch of time) she has a “little stranger,” and previously to its arrival she very industriously arranges a multitude of

pins on a cushion large enough for a pillow, in the form of a basket of flowers, surmounted by the inscription "*welcome sweet babe.*" Twice a-year she "turns the house out of the windows" to make a compound of many things, and more water, which she calls beer; and, as she prides herself upon being a "good manager," she persuades her neighbours, when she can, to allow her to brew for them. They send their malt, and she returns for each bushel about twelve gallons of — it cannot be said what. Malt and hops form the least portion of its ingredients. She keeps an account of every barrel she brews, when made, when "pegged," when to be tapped, and when drunk.

"Born to suckle fools, and chronicle small beer."

This lady is a substantial dame in person; her jolly and rubicund, and somewhat coarse face, denoteth a relish for hot suppers, and other abominations. She is liberal in her hospitality, which is of that class that crams all who share it to repletion. Her culinary preparations are manifold, and she invariably asks

those who partake of them if they “relish it.” She is, in the phraseology of our town, a “clever woman.” The ladies call her so because she rules her husband, and managing such a husband as fate has blessed her with, is no small merit, it must be allowed. He is everything by starts, and nothing long—a compound of “trifles light as air.” Now forming schemes of emigration, and “squatting” in the wilds of America or Van Diemen’s Land; now proposing to sell all, leave our town, and buy a partnership, or practise somewhere else, or to make a wager that he goes through the United Kingdom playing his flute, and relying upon the voluntary contributions of the public to realise a large sum in twelve months to be magnanimously appropriated to “charitable purposes.” Now wishing himself a daily labourer, now a savage.

The doctor hath a strange predilection for a travelling — or, to speak more correctly, a vagabond life. Formerly he was sent by his father a voyage to sea, to cure this propensity; but it failed. He went to San Domingo, and

now talks much of Christophe and claret, pine-apples and prickly pears. How often have I endured all this! He tells a capital joke of his, and, as it is considered his *chef-d'œuvre* in wit, you shall not lose it, reader. When he was at Hayti an old negro woman was particularly fond of singing a song about "gentle rivers," which she pronounced with a strong French accent, having been much accustomed to the society of the numerous French inhabitants of the island. There was an officer named Rivers in the service of Christophe, and the little doctor used to vex the old lady by inquiring why she was always singing about "genteel Rivers?" The doctor repeats this anecdote at every party he gives, or goes to, and laughs immoderately at it. He has repeated it to me at least fifty times, and the wit of it has lost none of its poignancy in the doctor's opinion. He always enjoys the joke, and I "grin and bear it." The little doctor has a twin brother, the counterpart of himself. He has many peculiarities, but this "twin" is a



thousand times worse—to mend him his father made him a lawyer.

“I’m sick when I think of your brother.”

The doctor had a dog, a pointer, one that he broke in himself, and, like most dogs that are broken in by gentlemen, he is not worth his food. But his master said Tache was the best dog in the world, described his points glowingly; his staunchness, his mode of hunting, how he “quartered his ground,” how steady he was, and for scent! he had the finest nose that ever nature made—he would smell a hare where a hare never was. Every man’s dog (like is horse) is the best in the world—*n’importe*. The doctor had to pay the tax upon his “sporting dog,” and his wife did not like it. The dog was sold, and one of our “shopkeepers” bought it. The latter did not choose to own he had been taken in and get laughed at. He therefore, said nothing about his purchase—his example is a good one, let us follow it.

We have shown why the ladies call the

doctor's wife a "clever woman," the gentlemen do so because she talks them to death. Let nobody blame them. Better pronounce her anything than listen to her. To exclaim "Ah! Mrs. Assington, you are *so* clever," is the only way to obtain silence. The lady affects modesty, tries to blush, simpers, and is for some time mute while she is ruminating upon the compliment.

Having treated of the little doctor, his wife, and his dog, nothing remains to be noticed but the "little strangers," who are as lively, jumping, scratching, snarling imps, as one need meet with — rather pretty too, for all their mischief. Always in life, positive life and motion, there is nothing passive about them. They are as if quicksilver had been injected into every vein, and at every bound seem to say,

"Little dancing loves we are,  
Who the deuce is our papa?"

## THE CLERGYMAN.

“ His certain life that never can deceive him,  
Is full of thousand sweets, and rich content.

\* \* \* \*

—— Neither tossed in boisterous seas,  
Or the vexatious world, or lost in slothful ease,  
Pleased and full blest he lives when he his God can please.”

LIKE many other persons, I am not quite satisfied with my own possessions, and look with some degree of envy on those of my neighbours. Such, I admit, is my want of liberality when I contemplate the excellent curate of B——, a village, situated about five miles from “ our town,” on the London Road. I cannot avoid it, I envy the good people of B—— nothing else. Their neat houses, their pretty gardens, their snug retirement, their worldly riches, all these they are welcome to I wish not for them, but I should certainly

like to transplant their curate. It would be cruel to do so, after all. The worthy man would not be appreciated in "our town."—Where he now is, and has been so many years, he is known, respected, and beloved. His truly christian-like deportment, and his manifold virtues have endeared him to every heart within the precincts of his curacy, and they are equally endeared to him by that sweet, and indissoluble tie, that binds to a generous bosom, all whom it hath befriended.

We naturally love those to whom we have afforded succour. The very idea that persons are dependent on us — that they look to us for support — that they are helpless, and rely on us for sustenance and hope, is sufficient to render them interesting; and where a truly generous mind feels an interest, and the object which excites it is deserving, affection is the result. No, it certainly will not do to remove this good man from the soil to which, if it be not his natural one, he hath become naturalized. In a strange land, fostered by ungentle hands, and neglected for the more

gaudy and everyday shrubs which attract most hearts and eyes in "our town," such a plant would fade, and die. Where he now is, the kindness of his heart is felt, and his virtues are known. The pastor and his flock are bound to each other, and long may they continue so.

It has been my fortune to know many members of the sacred profession; but I have never yet seen one who so completely unites the necessary qualities and essential virtues of a Christian pastor, as doth the curate of B——. We have in "our town" a rector who has many good qualities, but he is exclusive in his habits, and has suffered his aristocratical wife to rear around him an adamantine wall of pride, which shuts out all the gentle feelings of man. He is not comeatable by any man, woman, or child, who has not, in possession or expectancy, two thousand a year at least. He is amongst us, but not of us. He preaches, not *to*, but *at* us sometimes, but that in a manner which evinces that it is a task, not a pleasure. He has a regular set of sermons, at least so say those

who know or profess to know him, and they are supposed to revolve triennially. The sermon we have heard to-day, if we and the preacher are both alive this day three years, we shall hear again, and it will be preached in just the same hurried manner, and nasal strain, without regard to punctuation, enunciation, or anything else but the shortest way to the final close of it. The discourses are good in themselves, full of practical religion and moral duties, but they cannot be understood. Ninetenths of the congregation go out as wise as they came in, and by a sympathy for which it is scarcely difficult to account, they seem as anxious for the finish as the rector himself. Circumstances, he pronounces invariably — “*circunhances*,” and passes through a sermon as if there was neither comma nor period in it; but these are things which he evidently regards only as means to the end.

Our curate, though a good man, is somewhat too fond of exhibiting his Greek when in the pulpit, and of knick-knackery when out of it. A genius for mechanics may be a very respectable genius, but it is scarcely requisite

in a clergyman; nor is it essential that he should be "first fiddler" in every company. The Bishop of Burleigh substitutes faith for practice, and loves to warn his congregation with threats of eternal punishment. Pride with him supersedes humility. Christianity seems out of place when it is contradictory and at war with its own doctrines. Politeness, though as necessary in a clergyman as in any other man, should not degenerate into an awkward imitation of the graces of the dancing-school. That true politeness which springs from the heart, and an innate conviction of what is due to others, is ever pleasing; but the grimaces and bows that arise from a subservience to conventional forms only serve to exhibit heartlessness, and make those who practise them appear ridiculous.

If Christianity consists in having the welfare of our fellow-creatures really at heart; in correcting, while it makes allowances for, the errors and frailties of mankind; in believing in and promulgating the fatherly love of the Creator, his unbounded mercy and beneficence; and in practising all the virtues of charity and benevo-

lence ;—then is the excellent curate of B—— a genuine Christian—an ornament to the Church, and an honour to his species. He does not abuse the world and call it a vile one ; he does not make it a point of religion to hold out eternal punishments. He divests his faith of all the anger, hatred, and uncharitableness, which it in itself objects to. He practises neither exclusiveness nor intolerance, nor ferments theological dissensions. He is content to win the erring back by gentle persuasiveness and brotherly love. He watches carefully over the lower orders around him, preserves their opinions and principles, diffuses amongst them the lights that are essential to their present and eternal welfare, mixes frankly and affably with them, gains their confidence, and relieves their wants. In sickness and in health, he is their undeviating friend ; and they, from daily and hourly experience through a long series of years, know and feel that he is so. Their grievances are quietly communicated to him, and he becomes the respected arbiter of their disputes. He is the source of mitigation, and, by the influence of sincere, friendly, and



Christian-like counsel, affords relief to the aggrieved, and allays the irritation of the disappointed. If there is a place where Christianity rests from the storms of troubled waters, undisturbed by bitter or contentious spirits, and where its ark shows itself in its own sweet simple form and native purity, it is the village of B —.

Blessed with an ample fortune, he retains his curacy merely as a means of doing good. Its scanty stipend can be of no consideration; but the opportunity it affords of serving and improving his more humble fellow-beings is a sweet reward to his labours. What reward more sweet can there be, indeed, to one who really loves his fellow-men? What are the fleeting pleasures of sense contrasted with those of reason? or compared with the heartfelt delights afforded by that divine part of human nature which leads us to sympathise in the happiness of others, and teaches us that the nature of goodness is to impart and diffuse itself? Flourishes of rhetoric and the subtleties of schools do not comprise true religion; the diffusion of moral precepts is not sufficient alone — the practice of self-command, of virtue, and of charity, are in-

dispensable. Even the most ignorant cannot be long influenced by the precepts of those whose practice is at variance with them. But all, even the most profligate, evince respect for the man whose conduct in life is consistent with those lessons they teach to others. There cannot be a better illustration of this assertion than that which is afforded by the general opinions held of their clergyman by the respective inhabitants of "our town" and of B—. In the former place our clergymen are censured, not undeservedly, and the aristocratic pride of the rector, the trifling of the curate, and the affectation and mimicry of the Bishop of Burleigh, are ridiculed and satirized, reviled and cavilled at, according to the dispositions of the various persons who witness these follies. While the rector commands some degree of respect, because he has shown that he really has a heart and feeling for his parishioners, he is condemned or laughed at for the weakness which suffers him to let them remain in his wife's keeping. The curate, though everybody acknowledges that he hath good qualities, is laughed at also

for —. But it is painful to contemplate the degradation of the respectable offices of the Church farther.

Let us turn to the village of B——. “Look at this picture and on this!” There all, without one dissentient or hesitating voice, but with a cheerful and willing respect, and an earnest conviction of its justice and truth—all, the high and low, the pious and the profligate, proclaim their curate a “good man.” Never have I once heard him scoffed at—never have I once seen a smile caused by any reference to this amiable man, but that of grateful love and profound esteem, upon the face of any who knew him. I have often thought that such a man would have prevented much of the debauchery and vice of all kinds that sometimes reign in “our town.” Our pastors are fully as capable of subduing evil passions, and inculcating sound morality, to do them justice, as is the curate of B——; but the rector, like the late George the Fourth, shuts himself up in his own state; and the curate must have his glee-club, and build his organ. The one must gallop

over his sermon in twenty minutes, that he may gallop over his farm and round the glebe before dinner; and the other must occupy an hour and a quarter "by Shrewsbury clock" in teaching clowns who cannot read English the derivation of words in Greek. "'Tis true, 'tis pity—and *pity 'tis 'tis true.*"

Another pleasing result of the worthy clergyman's amiable example, is the extinction of party and caste, and the anti-social habits that too often prevail in country towns and hamlets, and which rage in "our town" in particular. The village of B—— seems to be no resting-place for the unworthy, they are either reformed, or, finding that their habits are un congenial with those of the majority, they retire to other spots more suitable to their tastes. Amongst those who remain, the ridiculous ideas of class and gentility that in "our town" rage, from the 'squire to the lawyer, the parson's wife to the tradesman's, are expunged. Conduct, not class, seems at B—— to be the prevalent criterion of merit. In "our town" caste only receives caste, and that with more

ceremony, though of a different character, than is observed by nobility in the London "seasons." A stranger need be at no loss, if he have common powers of observation, to judge of our amusements, mental culture, and bias. We sleep in a stagnant pool. We have drunk of the Lethe, that renders most of that which is amiable oblivious.

Our mental culture is a century behind, our amusements are scandal and ridicule of our neighbours, our bias is property. If a man has money, he is welcome; if he has not a grain of character, or talent, if his purse is drained, let him have both, we do not know him. Our "little doctor," who during seven years was neglected, and treated as a very little man indeed, has lately arrived at some property by the death of his father. The intelligence of this event was no sooner known, than he received invitations and other demonstrations of notice from those who a week before were above noticing him as a passing street acquaintance. Our "head banker," who had never previously given more than a stiff bow, in the

manner of a man who feels he is condescending, and who is determined that he who receives it shall feel the same, caused it to be intimated to the little man that he should "be happy to become better known to him." This affair, by the way, is the only one in which the apothecary did not show his usual littleness. He declined the honour. The recollection of recent neglect, and almost insult, to say nothing of the banker having been mainly instrumental to his being fined for a sporting trespass, was yet vivid in his memory.

Much of the clergyman's property is devoted to charitable purposes. In its distribution, he is actively assisted by his excellent lady, not in merely giving pecuniary aid, which the ostentatious may do, and gain thereby a reputation they do not merit, but in giving in a manner that renders it certain her gifts will be appropriated to the desired end; in daily visitings of the sick and helpless, in constant attention to their wants, and in silently contributing to their comforts. She gives not that it may be known. She desires not the loud-tongued

clamour of praise, but she has the grateful thanks of the afflicted, and the prayers of those whom her well-judged munificence has rendered happy. Her name is seldom seen in printed lists, where a guinea can buy a character for charity; her relief is administered at the bed-side, with real benevolence, while she soothes the sufferer with the soft benignity of an angel.

This lady is the mother of a large family. She has a countenance still expressive of beauty and surpassing mildness. She is plain in dress and manners, eminently plain; but she is the type of all that is lovely, and worthy of being beloved in woman. She aims at no effect, and at first sight produces none, unless it is that which among the worldly may be caused by the surprise that one who has the gifts of fortune so largely at her own disposal, should avail herself so little of them personally. But cold and obdurate indeed must be that heart, which would not glow with admiration of her virtues. The mildness of her eye, beaming forth charity and good-nature, the soft-

ness of her voice, breathing in every tone benevolence and feeling, the sweet diffidence of her unsophisticated manner, and the gentle and matronly air that hovers around her, would ensure the deepest respect and reverence from all whose breasts were not absolutely indurated. I have silently, and unobservedly gazed on her, while she has been superintending her lovely children, whose cheeks were tinged with health's brightest glow, and whose eyes sparkled with childish gaiety and innocent mirth. I have looked upon her, as she affectionately caressed them, or judiciously restrained their exuberant liveliness, and I have felt that in her was concentrated all I could conceive of feminine simplicity and matronly grace.

The feeble sketch I can give is far short of her merits. I am conscious of its unworthiness, yet it is a tribute of the heart—it is given where a grateful tribute is due; and though painfully impressed with its deficiencies, I could not avoid the effort however humble. These pages will never, it is likely, reach her, or any that know her, and if they do it will not



be known who is intended. The writer of them will never behold her again; they are the mere offspring of feeling which will not submit to restraint. Though warm, they are only the effusions of grateful esteem, and reverential respect; not written or entertained from a momentary impulse, for three years have elapsed since the writer beheld the object of them. Feelings that are based upon admiration of all that adorns and ennobles woman and human nature, are not evanescent.

Of the same character are the emotions to which a due contemplation of the excellent curate must give rise. His mild and gentleman-like, yet dignified deportment, his kind regard for the feelings and welfare of all that are known to him, his Christian-like charity and benevolence, may be equalled, though too seldom. They can never be exceeded. Of him it may with truth be said, that in every situation in which a man and a clergyman can be placed, he performs with religious exactness the duties assigned him. Neglecting his own enjoyments in consideration of others, living to

benefit others, his heart and purse ever open to the wants of others, and regardless of self A kind and affectionate husband, a fond and judiciously indulgent parent, a pious disseminator of the Christian faith, a practical observer of the virtues which that faith teaches, and a promoter of peace, good will, and felicity amongst all around him.

This worthy man is a noble bearer of the Christian standard. If ever that standard in its own native simplicity, and sacred whiteness, was waved by a hand that would preserve its heavenly purity unsullied—if ever the holy temples of Christianity were guarded, and preserved without spot or dilapidation by a faithful sentinel—it is by the amiable curate of B——, to whom all classes award the simple but expressive title—"a good man."

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